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EDITORIAL

## BROKEN SHIELD

When the Russians mistakenly shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007, killing 269 civilians, President Reagan called it "an act of barbarism, born of a society which wantonly disregards individual rights and the value of human life and seeks constantly to expand and dominate other nations." When the United States mistakenly shot down Iran Air Flight 655, killing 290 civilians, Reagan termed it a "terrible human tragedy" but an "understandable accident," and attempted to distinguish between the two episodes, partly on technological grounds.

This much is clear: The Aegis air defense system aboard the missile cruiser Vincennes is generally conceded to be the most sophisticated system afloat. Yet it proved unable to distinguish between a bulky civilian airliner, 177 feet long, and a svelte 62-foot F-14 jet fighter.

Aegis is Greek for "shield," reminding us of a more grandiose shield—Star Wars. Whatever the cause of the failure of the ship's system, the horrifying miscalculations, as in the case of K.A.L. 007, vividly dramatized how implausible is Reagan's pet technological fantasy.

The President has called for an inquiry into the Airbus shootdown. The Vincennes was in the Persian Gulf because of an ostensible policy of guaranteeing safe passage for ships. We favor inquiries into the human and technical etiology of tragedies like the downing of flights 007 and 655, but in the latter, at least, one conclusion already seems apparent: Given the techno-failures, not to mention the political ones, there's nothing the U.S. Navy can do in the gulf that a U.N. peacekeeping force couldn't do better with far fewer geopolitical risks. The Democratic contender missed an opportunity when he rushed to protect his right flank by defending the Vincennes's action rather than challenging the policy that put it there.

**DUKENOMICS**
**Andrew Kopkind**
**Alexander Cockburn**

**WHERE DO JESSE'S PEOPLE GO?**
**Andrew Kopkind**

**DUKAKIS'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH**
**Kurt Vonnegut**

**BRAIN TRUSTS**
**David Corn**

**LATINO VOTERS**
**Maria de los Angeles Torres**

**CONFESSIONS OF KAZAN**
**Eric Bentley**

THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE

## 'GEORGE BUSH,' C.I.A. OPERATIVE

JOSEPH McBRIDE

Vice President George Bush's résumé is his most highly touted asset as a candidate. But a recently discovered F.B.I. memorandum raises the possibility that, like many résumés, it omits some facts the applicant would rather not talk about: specifically, that he worked for the Central Intelligence Agency in 1963, more than a decade before he became its director.

The F.B.I. memorandum, dated November 29, 1963, is from Director J. Edgar Hoover to the State Department and is subject-headed "Assassination of President John F. Kennedy November 22, 1963." In it, Hoover reports that the Bureau had briefed "Mr. George Bush of the Central Intelligence Agency" shortly after the assassination on the reaction of Cuban exiles in Miami. A source with close connections to the intelligence community confirms that Bush started working for the agency in 1960 or 1961, using his oil business as a cover for clandestine activities.

Informed of this memorandum, the Vice President's spokesman, Stephen Hart, asked, "Are you sure it's the same George Bush?" After talking to the Vice President, Hart quoted him as follows: "I was in Houston, Texas, at the time and involved in the independent oil drilling business. And I was running for the Senate in late '63." "Must be another George Bush," added Hart.

Because the Vice President's response seemed something of a non-denial denial (he described what else he was doing rather than specifically denying C.I.A. involvement), I put the following queries to him via Hart:

(*Continued on Page 41*)

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# LETTERS.

### SOREL *SHANDE*

*Flushing, N.Y.*
Edward Sorel's caricature of New York City Mayor Ed Koch ["Drawn and Quoted," April 30] does not fall within the bounds of decency. Biting caricature of politicos and other prominent citizenry is normal. There are limits, however, which sound, humanist editing should be able to recognize.

The cartoonist portrayed Koch holding in his left hand a can on which there are some Hebrew characters. They (purposely?) are partly obscured, but one may discern the Yiddish equivalent of "Fatherland"; and a descriptive caption reads "For Planting Trees (and Arabs) in Israel"—with an arrow pointing toward the *pushke* (collection can). The exaggerated hooked nose that does adorn Koch's face in this instance is more like the kind of caricature that adorned the pages of the Nazi Streicher's infamous journal.

Such obscene anti-Semitism (the presentation is not "simply" anti-Israel) may inhabit the pages of extreme rightist journals, but I never dreamed I would see such filth in the hallowed pages of *The Nation*. *Albert Prago*

### A *FARSHTINKENER* BUSINESS

*New York City*
I see that Edward Sorel's sexist cartoon, "Enter Queen Lear, Triumphant" [March 5] has raised hackles among your readership. Your April 30 issue shows that he's undaunted, seeking to gain notoriety by vilifying as many groups as possible.

Sorel's Mayor Koch holds a tin can with Hebrew letters, obviously a reference to the blue-and-white Jewish National Fund cans that the artist says are used "For Planting Trees (and Arabs) in Israel." We deeply resent this depiction of our work, which has resulted in the creation of recreational parks and other projects that benefit all of Israel's citizens. I'll have to look through the archives of Berlin papers in the 1930s and 1940s to find such a nefarious Jewish cartoon character, complete with hooked nose and murderous intent toward non-Jews.

You're on a roll, Sorel! First sexism, now anti-Semitism. We anxiously await further displays of your original ideas in this progressive publication. *Stuart Paskow*
*Communications Director*
*Jewish National Fund*

### SOREL REPLIES

*New York City*
I don't know what Albert Prago means to infer from my use of the word "Fatherland," but in fact I simply copied the Hebrew letters from an old piece of sheet music I have, "Palestina Is Mein Faterland," by Isidor Lillian and Alex Olshanetsky, published in 1925.

I was fully aware that my line about "planting trees and Arabs" would disturb some Jews, but I never imagined that my rather benign caricature of Mayor Koch would remind *anyone* of Nazi propaganda art. As Fats Waller used to say: "One never knows, do one?" *Edward Sorel*

### AIDS BOO-BOOS

*New York City*
As one of the attorneys representing both of the John Does chronicled in Mark Gevisser's May 21 article, "HIV Carriers Have Rights Too," I commend you for raising some important civil rights issues created by the AIDS crisis. I would, however, like to call your attention to an omission and an error in your report.

First, while you kindly noted that Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund represents both John Does, you neglected to note that the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Southern California also represents the California Doe. The work of that affiliate's legal director, Paul Hoffman, and staff attorney, Susan McGreivy, has been invaluable in this suit, as it has in most of the AIDS-related litigation in Southern California, including the *Chalk v. Orange County School Board* decision described in the article.

Second, your reference to "HIV carriers" is simply incorrect. At present there is no inexpensive, reliable test to detect the presence of the actual HIV virus in an individual's blood. The current tests look for the presence of antibodies to the HIV virus, not the virus itself. Thus, a person who has a positive reaction to such an antigen test is referred to as "HIV seropositive" and is presumed to be a carrier, although the percentage of seropositives who are actually carriers of the virus is not known. All we can say at present is that seropositives have been "exposed to the HIV virus." *Mickey Wheatley*

### THE WHOLE *MEGILLAH*?

*New York City*
Seymour Krim's article on *The New York Times* ["Should I Give My Life to *The Times*?" April 23] certainly tears the Gray Lady to pieces. But it's a puzzler, not so much for its polemical thrust (which is as sharp as darts thrown at a numbers board in a London saloon, say) as for its primary message (which I read as the waste of time, the depletion of body-mind-spirit, that one endures in handling the Lady). For all of Krim's biting sendups, he still has me on the ropes wondering: Do we blame the messenger of the news or the source? A tiresome question, perhaps, but not altogether beside the point. As when Reagan, say, sends in the Marines at Grenada in a news blackout, and then challenges the newsmakers on their coverage, waving the flag in the bargain (and in the scam).

All of this from a Gray Lady druggie who suffers his daily hit on the notion, perhaps mistaken, that the reader of Gray don't know nuthin' till he/she reads and sorts out what's happenin' for his- or herself. All of which said, Sy Krim's piece still has to be a walloper to the *kishkas*, to borrow from his considerable bag of targeted, in-house *shtups*. *Sidney Bernard*

### KRIM REPLIES

*New York City*
One can only feel compassion for addicts and hope that the U.S. military finally does take action, so that victims like Sidney Bernard will be spared. *Seymour Krim*

### ISRAELI REFUSENIKS

*Jerusalem*
Please permit me the courtesy of your columns to thank the many scores of your readers who responded to Alexander Cockburn's item on Yesh Gvul ["Beat the Devil," April 9] by sending us letters and financial contributions. We were deeply touched to find our efforts receiving such tangible support and sympathy at this crucial juncture.

The Israeli government claims that the Palestinian uprising is "in decline." In fact, a campaign of repression is in full swing throughout the occupied territories. According to official figures, Palestinian fatalities are nearing 200, and over 5,000 have been injured (a recent case is a 9-month-old baby who lost an eye after being struck by a rubber bullet). There are close to 10,000 detainees, including countless minors, and approximately 2,000 are held under administrative detention without even the travesty of a trial. In its efforts to bring the Palestinian population to heel, the occupation authorities continue to subject entire communities to various forms of collective punishment.

With the Israeli government refusing to moderate its "iron fist" policies, it is up to Israel's peace movement to make a supreme effort. We can no longer rest content with protests and petitions that fall on deaf ears. More than ever before, direct action is called for. In view of the army's key role, it is encouraging to note that increasing numbers of soldiers are balking at anti-insurgency operations: Since the uprising, twenty-four soldiers have been imprisoned for refusing to serve in the occupied territories. A letter sponsored by Yesh Gvul, undertaking to take no part in the campaign of repression, now bears the signatures of 500 reservists.

All of the above highlights Yesh Gvul as the sole support group that aids the refuseniks and their families: Imprisoned soldiers are denied official dependents' allowances, which we try to replace by a modest grant. The steady growth in the trickle of refusals is straining our slender resources; your readers' generous contributions are therefore doubly timely. Our address is P.O. Box 6953, Jerusalem 91068, Israel. *Peretz Kidron*

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# EDITORIALS.

## Out of Nicaragua

Some invasions—or interventions—end in full, if somber, pageantry: Soviet tanks parade out through the craggy passes of northern Afghanistan, flower-garlanded Vietnamese officers lead the withdrawal of their forces from Phnom Penh. Others end in bathos: 400 *contra* support staff quietly pick up their pink slips in Miami. Or in face-saving acts of diplomatic finesse: Secretary of State George Shultz flies down to Central America to stand tall with the region's four "democratic" presidents.

Beneath the secretary's tough talk is the unmistakable message that an era is over. His "unequivocal pledge" that "we will not tolerate attempts to subvert democracy," the talk of "development with equity and security with peace"—these are Shultzian code words for what conservatives, when they come to write the history of these years, will call surrender, betrayal, another bugout. Just four months short of election time, it appears that no serious faction in Washington has the stomach for another round of *contra* aid hostilities. So the pipe dreams of rollback give way to the more familiar routines of containment.

Nicaraguans will be mightily relieved. Their resentment of an unjust war was always apparent; now there is some hard

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data on their views as well. According to a random sample poll of 1,129 Nicaraguans in early June, 85 percent oppose *contra* aid. The poll, the first independent survey of public opinion that the Sandinistas have allowed since they took power in 1979, was conducted under the auspices of the Jesuit-run Central American University (U.C.A.), and co-sponsored by the Los Angeles-based Interamerican Research Center [see William Bollinger and Daniel M. Lund, "Mixing Polls and Propaganda," *The Nation*, May 7].

The results are fascinating, and not a little perplexing. Nicaraguans appear divided on their government's political record: While 27 percent of respondents rated it excellent or good, 26 percent said it was bad or terrible. The Sandinistas' handling of the economy got lousy marks: Only 22 percent gave the government good or excellent here, 38 percent bad or terrible. But this didn't seem to affect Daniel Ortega's popularity as President: 42 percent thought his performance was good or excellent, 21 percent bad or terrible. Further surprises: More than half those polled favored the incorporation of the *contras* (decorously called the "Nicaraguan Resistance" in the pollsters' gesture of neutrality) as a legal political party. Asked to name the political party with which they identified, 28 percent named the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front; 59 percent said "None." A slim majority opposed the military draft, but a somewhat larger majority favored continuing the present relationship between the Sandinistas and the armed forces—which has been such a bone of contention in the stalled peace talks.

It's possible to quibble with some aspects of the survey. It was conducted only in Managua, and somewhat disproportionately in middle-class and select neighborhoods, where, as the pollsters themselves acknowledge, there is a heavy concentration of white-collar workers, students and military officials likely to be sympathetic to the government. But there is little evidence that this weighting slanted the results. There is not much in the poll to cheer the Sandinistas—except for the simple fact of its existence. Unimpeded public opinion polls are, after all, a good yardstick of a functioning democracy. Yet 48 percent of those questioned in the U.C.A. poll, in a straight Yes/No format, said Nicaragua was not democratic. The poll demonstrates again that Nicaragua, nine years into its revolution, remains a more doggedly independent, complex and contradictory place than most of us imagine.

## HONORS AND DECISIONS

Last month, the Newspaper Guild of New York announced its annual Page One Awards. Honored in the category Columns (Feature Writing), Magazines, was Katha Pollitt for her article "The Strange Case of Baby M" (May 23, 1987). The judges praised the "fresh insights" Pollitt brought to "one of the most thoroughly covered stories of the year."

Edward Sorel's cartoon "It's Only a Theory" (October 24, 1987) was singled out in the Editorial Cartoons (Magazines) category. The judges called it "a courageous breakthrough . . . which may be controversial, but which will last as an image in the 'mind's eye' and 'mind's thought.'"

On another front, The Nation Institute was one of sixty-five groups and individuals opposing the U.S. government's attempt to close the Palestine Liberation Organization's mission to the United Nations. Our suit challenged the legality of the closing and the constitutionality of the Anti-Terrorism Act, on which the government's action was based, as a violation of separation of powers and First Amendment guarantees of free exchange of ideas, and as a bill of attainder. Federal District Court Judge Edmund Palmieri ruled that the government could not close the mission but refused to find the statute unconstitutional. Leonard Boudin, counsel for the sixty-five, will appeal.

# The Meese Legacy

Edwin Meese 3d was so bad an Attorney General that he probably did some good. The nation became so disgusted by his loose ethics, his misuse of his office, his excessive partisanship, that he became an enormous political liability, and even the unwavering support of his master couldn't save him from being forced to resign. It is a safe bet that no matter who is elected President in November, the next Attorney General will have at least some integrity.

The damage that Meese did to the cause of liberty, justice and good government will not be easily overcome, however. The Iran/*contra* investigations have been irreparably injured by his calculated casualness in making his investigation, the primary effect of which was to alert Oliver North that the jig was up and that the shredding party better start right away.

Meese's attacks on the Supreme Court and his intellectually bankrupt original intent doctrine, a shoddy and transparent effort to undermine long-established constitutional doctrines promoting individual liberty and social justice, have been dismissed with the scorn they deserve. But the opposition of the Federal government to the aspirations of blacks and other minorities, an opposition that he and his mendacious colleague William Bradford Reynolds led, helped generate an atmosphere of racial hatred and bigotry that reverberated from Howard Beach, Queens, to college campuses.

Most damaging, Meese was the main force behind the campaign to put reactionary judges on the Federal bench. Long after Meese is gone and forgotten, a name in the history books alongside those of John Mitchell, Richard Kleindienst, A. Mitchell Palmer, and Harry Daugherty of Teapot Dome fame, his judicial legacy will survive. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, and Federal judges Douglas Ginsburg, Daniel Manion and Frank Easterbrook will be there, working to keep the courts indifferent to the assaults on liberty and the cries for social justice.

HERMAN SCHWARTZ

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# George Bush

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

Did you do any work with or for the C.I.A. prior to the time you became its director?

If so, what was the nature of your relationship with the agency, and how long did it last?

Did you receive a briefing by a member of the F.B.I. on anti-Castro Cuban activities in the aftermath of the assassination of President Kennedy?

Half an hour later, Hart called me back to say that he had not spoken again to the Vice President about the matter, but would answer the questions himself. The answer to the first question was no, he said, and so he would skip number two. To the third, he repeated Bush's answer quoted above, but added that Bush had also said, "I don't have any idea of what he's talking about." However, when Bush's denial was read back to him, Hart said he preferred that it not be quoted directly, explaining, "It's a week old now, and I'm going off my notes." When I reminded him that we wanted to quote Bush directly, Hart said, "I am a spokesman. However you want to write it, the answer is no" regarding Bush's alleged 1963 involvement with the C.I.A.

"This is the first time I've ever heard this," C.I.A. spokesman Bill Devine said when confronted with the allegation of the Vice President's involvement with the agency in the early 1960s. "I'll see what I can find out and call you back." The next day Devine called back with the terse official response: "I can neither confirm nor deny." Told what the Vice President's office had said, and asked if he could check whether there had been another George Bush in the C.I.A., Devine seemed to become a bit nonplussed: "Twenty-seven years ago? I doubt that very much. In any event, we just have a standard policy of not confirming that anyone is involved with the C.I.A."

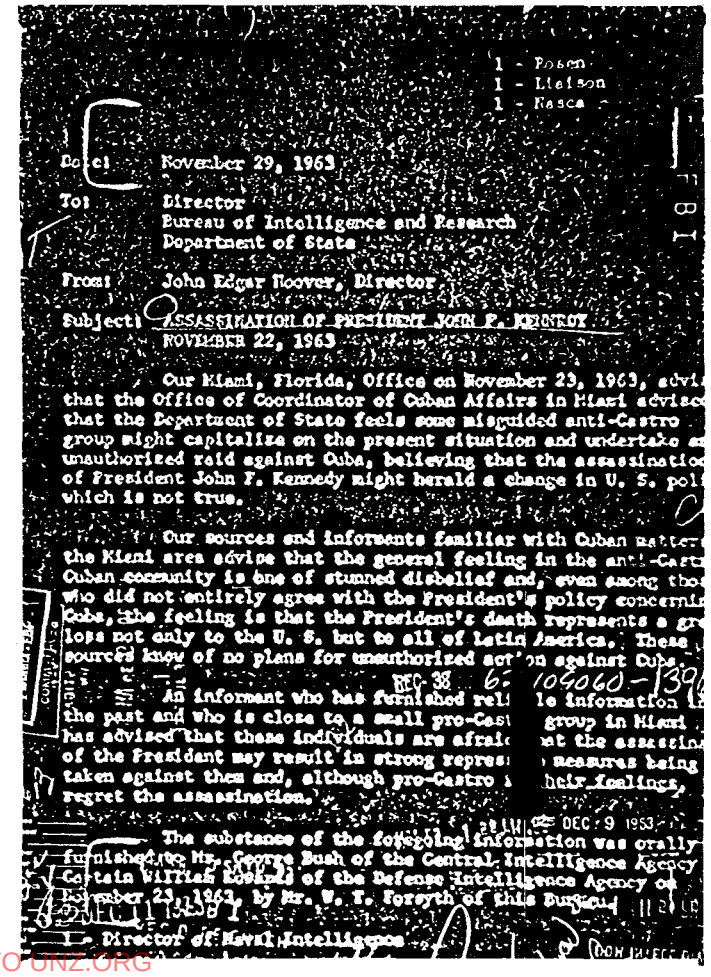
Richard Helms, who was deputy director for plans at the agency in 1963, said the appearance of Bush's name in the memo "must have been some kind of misprint. I don't recall anyone by that name working for the agency. . . . He certainly never worked for me."

Hoover's memo, which was written to the director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, was buried among the 98,755 pages of F.B.I. documents released to the public in 1977 and 1978 as a result of Freedom of Information Act suits. It was written to summarize the briefing given to Bush and Capt. William Edwards of the Defense Intelligence Agency by the F.B.I.'s W.T. Forsyth on November 23, the day after the assassination, when Lee Harvey Oswald was still alive to be interrogated about his connections to Cuban exiles and the C.I.A. The briefing was held, according to the F.B.I. director, because the State Department feared that "some misguided anti-Castro group might capitalize on the present situation and undertake an unauthorized raid against Cuba, believing that the assassination of President John F. Kennedy might herald a change in U.S. policy, which is not true." Hoover continues:

> Our sources and informants familiar with Cuban matters in the Miami area advise that the general feeling in the anti-Castro Cuban community is one of stunned disbelief and, even among those who did not entirely agree with the President's policy concerning Cuba, the feeling is that the President's death represents a great loss not only to the U.S. but to all of Latin America. These sources know of no plans for unauthorized action against Cuba.
>
> An informant who has furnished reliable information in the past and who is close to a small pro-Castro group in Miami has advised that these individuals are afraid that the assassination of the President may result in strong repressive measures being taken against them and, although pro-Castro in their feelings, regret the assassination.
>
> The substance of the foregoing information was orally furnished to Mr. George Bush of the Central Intelligence Agency. . . .

(We attempted to locate William T. Forsyth, but learned that he is dead. Forsyth worked out of the Washington F.B.I. headquarters and was best known for running the investigation of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in the Bureau's subversive control section. Efforts to locate Captain Edwards by press time were unsuccessful.)

Vice President Bush's autobiography, *Looking Forward*, written with Victor Gold (Doubleday, 1987), is vague to the point of being cryptic about his activities in the early 1960s, when he was running the Houston-based Zapata Off-Shore Company. ("Running an offshore oil company," he writes, "would mean days spent on or over water; not only the Gulf



1 - Rosen
1 - Liaison
1 - Rasca

Date: November 29, 1963

To: Director
Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
NOVEMBER 22, 1963

Our Miami, Florida, Office on November 23, 1963, advi
that the Office of Coordinator of Cuban Affairs in Miami advise
that the Department of State feels some misguided anti-Castro
group might capitalize on the present situation and undertake a
unauthorized raid against Cuba, believing that the assassinatio
of President John F. Kennedy might herald a change in U. S. pol
which is not true.

Our sources and informants familiar with Cuban matter
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Cuban community is one of stunned disbelief and, even among tho
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loss not only to the U. S. but to all of Latin America. These
sources know of no plans for unauthorized act on against Cuba.

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An informant who has furnished rel le information i
the past and who is close to a small pro-Cast group in Miami
has advised that these individuals are afrai at the assassin
of the President may result in strong repres measures being
taken against them and, although pro-Castro their feelings,
regret the assassination.

DEC 9 1963

The substance of the foregoing information was orally
furnished to Mr. George Bush of the Central Intelligence Agency
Captain William Edwards of the Defense Intelligence Agency on
November 23, 1963, by Mr. W. T. Forsyth of this Bureau.

Director of Naval Intelligence

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of Mexico but oceans and seas the world over.") But the 1972 profile of Bush in *Current Biography* provides more details of his itinerary in those years: "Bush travelled throughout the world to sell Zapata's oil-drilling services. Under his direction it grew to be a multimillion-dollar concern, with operations in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Japan, Australia, and Western Europe." And according to Nicholas King's *George Bush: A Biography*, Zapata was concentrating its business in the Caribbean and off South America in the early 1960s, a piece of information that meshes neatly with the available data on Bush's early C.I.A. responsibilities.

Bush's duties with the C.I.A. in 1963—whether he was an agent, for example, or merely an "asset"—cannot be determined from Hoover's memo. However, the intelligence source (who worked with the agency in the late 1950s and through the 1960s) said of the Vice President: "I know he was involved in the Caribbean. I know he was involved in the suppression of things after the Kennedy assassination: There was a very definite worry that some Cuban groups were going to move against Castro and attempt to blame it on the C.I.A."

The initial reaction of Senator Frank Church, chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, to the firing of William Colby and the naming of Bush as Director of Central Intelligence in 1975 was to complain that it was part of a pattern of attempts by President Gerald Ford (a former member of the Warren commission) to impede the Church committee's nearly concluded investigation into C.I.A. assassination plots, with which Colby was cooperating but which Ford was trying vainly to keep secret.

Bush's autobiography skips capriciously over the period of the early 1960s, easing back into coherence only when he makes his official entry into public life as chair of the Harris County, Texas, Republican Party in 1963-64, runs unsuccessfully for the Senate in 1964 against Democratic incumbent Ralph Yarborough, quits the oil business in 1966 and becomes the victorious candidate for Congress from Houston, serving two terms before losing the 1970 Senate race to Lloyd Bentsen, who had defeated Yarborough in the primary. Asked recently about Bush's early C.I.A. connections, Yarborough said, "I never heard anything about it. It doesn't surprise me. What surprised me was they picked him for Director of Central Intelligence—how in hell he was appointed head of the C.I.A. without any experience or knowledge." Hoover's memo "explains something to me that I've always wondered about. It *does* make sense to have a trained C.I.A. man, with experience, appointed to the job."

Bush's appointment as the agency's director in 1975 was widely criticized because, as Bush writes, "Bill Colby, a professional in the intelligence field, was being replaced by a nonprofessional outsider—and a politician to boot." Senator Church commented: "It appears as though the White House may be using this important post merely as a grooming room before he is brought on stage next year as a vice-presidential running mate." Speaking against the appointment, Church said he knew of "no particular reason why [Bush] is qualified" for the job; Bush himself characterized the appointment as a "real shocker." In his autobiography Bush points out, "I'd come to the CIA with some general knowledge of how it operated." His remark in the book that his "overseas contacts as a businessman" helped qualify him for the controversial appointment by President Nixon to the post of ambassador to the United Nations could also refer to previous C.I.A. experience. Agents often adopt the cover of a businessman. And business people have also served as informants for the agency, passing along information picked up on their travels.

Bush's C.I.A. connections might throw new light on his knowledge of the *contra* funding and supply operation, and his alleged knowledge of *contra* drug smuggling and the activities of General Noriega. It is worth noting in this context that, as Leslie Cockburn writes in *Out of Control*, "The anti-Castro C.I.A. team in Florida were already drawing attention to their drug-smuggling activities by 1963," and that it was Felix Rodriguez, the C.I.A. "alumnus who wore Che Guevara's watch and counted George Bush among his friends," who allegedly coordinated a $10 million payment to the *contras* by the Colombian cocaine cartel.

"Do the American people really want to elect a former director of the C.I.A. as their President?" Tom Wicker asked in *The New York Times* on April 29. "That's hardly been discussed so far; but it seems obvious that a C.I.A. chief might well be privy to the kind of 'black' secrets that could later make him—as a public figure—subject to blackmail. Given the agency's worldwide reputation for covert intervention and political meddling, moreover, one of its former directors in the White House certainly would be the object of suspicion and mistrust in numerous parts of the globe. And well he might be."

It was characteristic of George Bush, when sworn in as Director of Central Intelligence in 1976, to declare: "I am determined to protect those things that must be kept secret, and I am more determined to protect those unselfish and patriotic people who, with total dedication, serve their country, often putting their lives on the line, only to have some people bent on destroying this agency expose their names."

Bush has absorbed the code of the C.I.A. well, and he may feel that he is duty-bound to draw a veil of secrecy over his activities of the early 1960s. But now, as candidate for the presidency, he has a higher duty of honesty to the American people. If the man who would be President has a longstanding history of involvement in covert activities, then the people are entitled to know about it. Thus far Bush has refused to directly deny such involvement. Either he is intentionally misleading us, or he is a victim of mistaken identity. If it's the latter, he or President Reagan should instruct the gnomes of Langley to turn over the personnel records of the *other* George Bush. The claims of national security pale beside the overriding national interest in the truth.

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*Joseph McBride is the author of a biography of Frank Capra, to be published by Alfred A. Knopf.*

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# MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

*Prague*

I cherished only two modest ambitions for my visit to this capital of the mummified baroque. The first was to be allowed to attend a legal meeting at which men and women from the human rights movements in the East and the disarmament movements in the West would be attempting to establish a common terrain. The second was to be the first writer in modern history to compose an article from Prague that did not mention Joseph K or his equally imperishable creator. The latter ambition was repeatedly thwarted by the former.

You attend a meeting in a private apartment. An introductory statement is made by a man who was once Foreign Minister of the Republic under Alexander Dubček but who is now an unperson in Czechoslovakia. There is a knock on the door. Into the apartment come uniformed and plainclothes police, led by a man with eyes so close together that he could comfortably get by with a monocle. While one of his underlings sweeps the room with a video camera, he issues peremptory instructions to depart. At my request, the former Foreign Minister inquires politely if we may know what law has been infringed, and in what respect this law contravenes the Helsinki Accords. He further inquires, on behalf of his foreign guests, if they may telephone their embassies. Neither request is exactly denied. Instead, the police official simply refuses to say on what charge, or for what cause, the Czechoslovaks or the foreigners are being treated in this fashion.

Still striving to avoid the easy resort to Kafka, I talk to one of the Hungarian delegates during the brief period of our segregation together. It reminds me, I say adventurously, of Nabokov's 1947 novel *Bend Sinister*. In this prescient and haunting book, a group of dolts and bullies takes power, under the leadership of the appalling Paduk, in the name of the Party of the Average Man. This pseudopopulist party understands the deadly combination of stupidity and cunning. It specializes in knowing the weak points of the human subject and possesses a ghastly, mediocre patience. My Hungarian friend nods in appreciation but proposes an alternative encapsulation. "What we see here," he says, "is what Gramsci described as *cretinismo eroico*."

Next day, while in detention at the police station, we read a crude and fantastic denunciation of one of our Czechoslovak hosts, Petr Uhl, one of the original signatories of Charter 77 and a man who has served almost a decade in prison. He is castigated across several columns of the rubbishy party paper *Rude Pravo* for being what he actually is—a dangerous leftist. The journal laboriously connects his ideas to those of a certain Trotsky, adding in brackets after this exotic name the explanatory word "Bronstein." Feeling against "cosmopolitans" has never been especially strong in Czechoslovakia, but the view of the Party of the Average Man has long been that every little bit helps.

I have seldom been arrested by such pitiable people, and have never been detained in such distinguished company. Present with me were two women with exemplary records in the movement initiated by Edward Thompson and known throughout Europe as END (European Nuclear Disarmament). There was a representative of the Polish Freedom and Peace group; a leader of the Slovene dissidents in Yugoslavia; and the above-mentioned Hungarian, whose colleagues have recently succeeded in setting up flourishing and independent political clubs in Budapest. There was a woman from India, who has been energetic in the campaign for the victims of Union Carbide in Bhopal. There were two battle-hardened Puerto Rican socialists. The West German Greens, the Dutch antinuclear movement and some interesting revisionists from the Italian left were also in the bag.

But our predicament, and its ironies, was a paltry one when compared with that of our hosts. And here, a simple point that also contradicts Kafka. None of the Czechoslovaks, when being grabbed and driven away, showed the least sign of fear. Jiři Hájek, who, as referred to above, used to be Alexander Dubček's Foreign Minister, served five years in a camp under the Nazis and has every right to be unimpressed by the relative cretinism of the Czechoslovak quislings of today. But many of those who offered us bed and board were only three or four years old at the time of the Warsaw Pact invasion in 1968. And they went, quite confidently and cheerfully, all the way to prison for the sake of our meeting.

It is this, really, that spells defeat for the miserable regime established by Brezhnev two decades ago. As Isaac Deutscher was fond of saying: "Plus c'est la même chose—plus ça change." Attempting to freeze and petrify society, the post-Stalinist apparat has created cynicism and disgust on a colossal scale. Talk to anybody—anybody—in a cafe in Prague and you will encounter that mixture of humor and contempt that negates all the efforts of the conformists.

It does not take a political genius to notice that *Rude Pravo* never mentions Mikhail Gorbachev unless it has to. It does not take a political genius to observe that the missile-flourishing Reagan of a few years ago was a free gift to *Rude Pravo* and its automaton propagandists. When the brave leaders of Charter 77 issued their invitation East and West (and South), they were explicitly seeking to connect the struggle for democracy to the struggle against militarism. Ever since Chernobyl, it has been easier and more urgent to make internationalist connections between the nuclear menace and the battle against political secrecy and the "security state."

At dusk on the Charles Bridge, small groups of young Czechs gather every night under the statues to play guitars and pass bottles of wine. They sing the forbidden 1968 songs of Marta Kubisova, and the police don't know quite what to do about it. The orders from the top, and from Moscow, are not as direct or as clear as they used to be. The Castle still looms above the city from the Hradčany Hill, but it is inhabited by pygmies who were fished out of the dustbin of history and who whimper in their sleep at the thought of going back to it.

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# BEAT THE DEVIL.

## Great Balls of Fire

Not for the first time in the career of the Reagan Administration, physical disaster and political set-back have come in the form of a fiery explosion in the heavens, followed by the grim culling of human remains and mechanical debris from the sea.

The explosion of the space shuttle Challenger spelled the end of the heroic phase of a space fantasy engendered in the Kennedy era. And if some blame for that catastrophe attaches to the political pressures surrounding NASA's eagerness to get the shuttle up in time for President Reagan's 1986 State of the Union message, the direct cause lay in the contractual procedures and bottom-line priorities of the aerospace industry and its contract-issuing opposite numbers in government.

The destruction of Iran Air Flight 655 provokes a similar set of consequences and conclusions: the definitive end of a particularly high-strutting phase of American moral self-righteousness, stoked to white heat in the post-Afghanistan invasion period by the downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007. Attachment of blame must go to the U.S. government for sending the missile cruiser Vincennes to those troubled waters, but the primary responsibility rests with the military-industrial complex that produced the equipment that caused an entirely avoidable loss of 290 lives.

The official U.S. version, expressed by Adm. William Crowe after ten and a half hours of deliberation in the Pentagon following the shooting down of the Airbus, is full of obvious holes, some so cavernous that the story has had to be revised on a daily basis. They claimed the Airbus was going down, but it was going up. First the Airbus transponder (actually it had two) was off, then on but "ambiguous"; now maybe this ambiguity came from another plane. First it was not on its flight path, then five miles the far side of its flight path from the Vincennes, now maybe on its flight plan after all. An attacking F-14 would have been flying much faster and much lower and is not designed to carry anti-ship missiles anyway. In fact, Capt. Will Rogers 3d of the Vincennes probably remembered most clearly the forced resignation of Capt. Glenn Brindel of the Stark after an Iraqi Exocet killed thirty-seven of his men. (It was after the Iraqi attack, remember, that President Reagan turned his pitiless wrath on the Iranians.)

The Aegis carriers and the high-tech systems installed on them are all part of what Mary Kaldor once called the "baroque arsenal" dear to the heart of military Keynesians and "defense" contractors such as those now under investigation by the F.B.I. One such contractor, Unisys,* received a secondary-source contract for the Aegis radar system in 1986.

The consequences of military Keynesianism, *a k a* delirious pork-barreling, were aptly, if distressingly, evoked by the scene over the Strait of Hormuz on July 3, at 10:54 A.M., Persian Gulf time. Any Iranian equipped with thrifty binoculars in the vicinity could see the Airbus proceeding toward Dubai; indeed, one Iranian was able to videotape the fateful encounter of the Airbus and missile. No such ease of vision was afforded the U.S. mariners serving the military-industrial system as it has been perfected in the late 1980s. Compelled to rely on an Aegis radar system costing, with its associated hard- and software, about half the price of the $1 billion cruiser, they could not distinguish between an F-14 and an Airbus. The Aegis and its allied electronic warfare system, the SLQ-32, was unable to say whether friend or foe approached. Captain Brindel of the Stark said his ship's SLQ-32 system didn't work.

Heading the inquiry into the shooting down of the Airbus is Rear Adm. William Fogarty, who used to be captain of the battleship New Jersey. That should remind us of the political misjudgments that put the Vincennes where it was on July 3. It was the New Jersey's presence off Beirut in 1982 and its shelling of Shiite and Druse villages that led in part to the blowing up of 243 U.S. marines. What Fogarty, the press and Congress should be doing is asking why expensive and malfunctioning technology came to be bought and installed on the Vincennes. Why blame the captain if he is given lousy tools? The Aegis radar system has long been an object of scandal. In tests in April 1983, it detected and shot down only four of sixteen decoys. Five months later it had upped its score to only three of six targets. When Representative Denny Smith forced a fresh set of tests in May 1984 the Aegis scored a miraculous ten out of eleven hits. Funding for Aegis duly surged forward. The General Accounting Office recently completed a report on that final set of tests, but it is as of yet classified.

Corporations producing systems like Aegis (G.E.-RCA—Reagan's old firm—was its prime contractor) have been the most permanent actors in the Reagan economy in all its glory. It is to them or their relatives that a President Dukakis would turn in the cause of his proposed Conventional Defense Initiative. At least those 290 passengers were sacrificed on the altar of something as substantial as the well-being of the U.S. economy, to whose contractors something as vulgarly cheap as a pair of binoculars is an economic affront, as if the shareholders of Grumman were urged that a morally correct course would be for their corporation to build aluminum canoes rather than F-14s. A baroque arsenal has no room for canoes or binoculars, as

* Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci remains one of the press's favorite bureaucrats, but his own encounter with Unisys indicates the ambit and syntax of the procurement scandal. Carlucci was on the boards of both Burroughs and Sperry, which merged to form Unisys. In his financial disclosure report of November 1987 Carlucci revealed that when he returned to work for the Pentagon he set up deferred compensation plans including an $82,000 lump sum to be received from Unisys-Sperry following his Federal service and $14,300 a year to be received beginning November 1990. In addition Carlucci had a similar plan set up with Unisys-Burroughs and a pension plan with Unisys-Sperry. Astoundingly, in the words of Dave Evans of the *Chicago Tribune*, the Pentagon believed these financial arrangements did not represent a conflict of interest. Carlucci himself appeared to become aware of the "unfortunate atmospherics" (Evans) surrounding the original agreements because according to his financial statement of May 16, 1987, he cashed out of his Unisys-Burroughs plan and received a check for $96,000. Evans said Carlucci cashed out in such a hurry that he signed the form in the wrong space.

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

those men, women and children aboard Flight 655 had the misfortune to discover.

## An Odious Fellow

A couple of weeks ago I made a disobliging reference to Father Theodore Hesburgh, but I lacked the space for copious adumbration of the evidence. Since he retains some measure of liberal esteem, partly because of his work on the Civil Rights Commission, of which he was a founding member in 1957 and chair from 1969 to 1972, here is more of the Hesburgh story.

When he retired in May of 1987, Hesburgh had been president of Notre Dame for thirty-five years. One of his early acts as president was to move from a clerical to a nonclerical board, which allowed Notre Dame to attract Federal moneys. He also used his extensive national contacts with such stalwarts of morality as J. Peter Grace and David Rockefeller to attract huge sources of funding to the campus; the endowment stood at $9 million in 1952, his first year as president, and soared to $350 million in 1987.

A story from the Vietnam era gives a good idea of Hesburgh's own morality. It is by Carl Estabrook, now a visiting scholar at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and appears in the February 1988 issue of *Common Sense*. Estabrook was an instructor in the history department at Notre Dame until spring 1971, when his contract was not renewed. No reason was offered, and Estabrook believes that he was not retained because of his involvement in the antiwar movement. Back in the fall of 1969 Notre Dame had scheduled recruiting meetings for the C.I.A. and Dow (Napalm) Chemical Company. The university has long been a prime recruitment spot for the C.I.A.; Philip Agee and Ralph McGehee are both graduates. Ten students, foolishly assuming that the university believed in open debate, sat down in front of the doors of the building where the interviews were to be held. The university immediately called the police and had them arrested. Notre Dame took action against the students in both the state courts and within the university itself. The university treated the issue like a case of student drunkenness, denying there was any moral issue involved. Ultimately all the students were punished with one form or another of suspension, and it was reported that the university notified their draft boards that they were now available for call-up.

In 1981, when Hesburgh was a member of the government amnesty board, he said he favored pardons for "Vietnam offenders," asserting he was in the "pardoning business." As Estabrook points out in his article, the first comment shows that Hesburgh still believes in the justness of the Vietnam War; the second is merely a foul capitalist metaphor applied to spiritual beliefs.

Here are some of the other highlights of the career of the man who made Notre Dame one of the more reactionary campuses in the country: He resisted any attempt at unionization on campus. In the late 1970s a union-busting law firm from Chicago was called in to derail the organizing drive of the groundskeepers, mostly blacks and Chicanos.

Notre Dame has the biggest R.O.T.C. program in the country. According to a 1987 story by Colman McCarthy in *The Washington Post* more than 10 percent of the student body—790 students in all—were enrolled in the R.O.T.C. That percentage is the highest in the nation. Hesburgh told McCarthy that six Catholic masses per semester were celebrated for the R.O.T.C.-ers. (Naturally, Notre Dame does quite well on the program; in 1987 it received $5.5 million in R.O.T.C. scholarships.)

As mentioned in my last column, Notre Dame has refused to divest its stocks in companies doing business in South Africa; Hesburgh himself has been a leading defender of continued investment. His authority is used by corporations and universities across the country who defend their apartheid holdings. A Hesburgh protégé, Father Oliver Williams, a Holy Cross priest who teaches ethics in the Notre Dame business school, travels the country promoting continued investment.

Incredibly, Williams has recently been put in charge of minority affairs on campus. This is probably not a very demanding job, as the Right Reverend Hesburgh's minority recruitment policies were so successful that the number of black and Latino students in the undergraduate body has dropped sharply in recent years. In 1986, only 179 of 7,439 students were black Americans. (Nor has Hesburgh been a great promoter of women's rights, despite the fact that he likes to portray himself as progressive in this area. He opened admissions to women in 1972, confiding to Colman McCarthy that Notre Dame, at the time, was "a big macho place." Yet by 1987 only seven of forty-nine trustees were women.) In 1985 the Rev. Beyers Naude, a leading Afrikaner opponent of apartheid, received an honorary degree but was denied the opportunity to speak, this on his first visit to the United States after eight years of being a banned person in South Africa. Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte was the commencement speaker at this event, however. Also, *contra* leader Adolfo Calero was at the lunch and dinner before the commencement and he has been hosted by Hesburgh on other occasions as well.

Hesburgh continues to receive lavish, and undeserving, praise from the corporate media. On June 12, Alex Ward wrote a piece in *The New York Times Magazine* on what a tough job Edward Malloy, the new president of Notre Dame, would have filling Hesburgh's shoes. A sample of Ward's hagiography:

> Brilliant, forceful and charismatic, Hesburgh, who governed the university for three and a half decades, became a legend on campus, where stories of students scampering up fire escapes outside his office for a glimpse of the great man are a part of Notre Dame lore, like winning one for the Gipper.

Obviously, Ward is not familiar with Reagan's modified victory cry for the Gippet.

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# ARTICLES.

BASIC DUKANOMICS

# Mike Dukakis's Political Economy

ANDREW KOPKIND AND
ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Here we go again. Democrats of liberal bent have begun the soothing process of self-delusion that characterizes the early stage of every election campaign in which, as *Time* predicts for this one, "temperaments and styles" rather than "ideas and ideologies" define the differences between the candidates. In 1980, Jimmy Carter had already laid the political and programmatic basis for what soon became known as Reaganism. Long before the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, he and his national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, had revived the dormant cold war; he had embarked on an unprecedented military buildup; and he had cut back social programs in the pursuit of regressive budgetary decorum. Then in 1984, Walter Mondale easily defeated a modest progressive revolt by Jesse Jackson's camp and ran on a platform that incorporated the themes of Reaganism triumphant: military expansion; U.S. hegemony in Central America, the Caribbean and the Middle East; shrinkage in the welfare system; denial of black demands for equity; and submission to the corporate imperative. And in both those campaigns—as so many times in the past—Democrats who should have known better made all manner of excuses and raised false hopes, and marched away behind the party's standard bearer to deserved defeats.

Another parade is now in formation, as Michael Dukakis tries to kick a much more serious progressive insurrection out of the way and to assume the party leader's role of being all things to all respectable interests. Brookline liberal, Harvard technocrat, 1950s internationalist, New Frontiersman, neoliberal, 1980s manager, earnest ethnic, bouzouki dancer, retentive lawyer, *shaygets* husband: Dukakis does not lack for material for every possible rationalization of his shortcomings in the department of ideology and issues. He stands in the middle of the party between the military-racist faction on one side, and the Jacksonian progressives on the other. Most civilized Democratic voters will see that he is better, in some essentialist reading, than Bush. But before all discernment is lost in the rage to elect Anybody but Bush, it might be a good idea to look at the Dukakis project (amorphous as it is designed to be) and to understand the world he wants to win.

At first glance, the planet Dukakis would inherit seems remarkably different from the one Jimmy Carter gave up. General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and President Reagan have conspired, in fact if not treaty, to domesticate the cold war, at least to the polite stage of the Nixon-Brezhnev condominium. Certain consequences of the tacit armistice are at once obvious. As in the Nixon years, et seq., Pentagon spending may decline in relation to other budgetary items. But "military Keynesianism" works, at least for the time being, which is all the time capital needs. Defense spending drove the economic choo-choo Reagan commanded (and helped make the miracle in eastern Massachusetts). As former Reaganaut Martin Anderson wrote in *Revolution*, "The defense budget drove fiscal policy, not the other way around. First, the level of the defense budget was set and then, and then only, were the other key elements of taxes, domestic spending, and the size of the deficit considered." Dukakis refused to allow Jackson's "zero growth" proposal on Pentagon spending to slip into the Democratic platform. In fact, Dukakis has already roughed out the rationale for defense budget sustenance: a "conventional defense initiative" in Europe that uses the traditional rationale of a supposed imbalance in NATO and Warsaw pact force levels to demand a lot of outrageously expensive high-tech warfighting bric-a-brac—some of it made in Massachusetts. The arms makers can sleep easy. Nowhere in his economic plans, as he has made them known so far, is there any sign of a civilian substitute for the military factor in public economic investment. In fact, even by the low standards of such enterprises, Dukakis's economic strategy has a spectral impalpability. One of his leading economic advisers, Lawrence Summers, worked in Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers and lisped his numbers at the knee of Bush's economic consigliere, Martin Feldstein.

As the Politburo restricts its energies to internal defense, an American Administration will feel less pressure to modify its imperial "commitments" in the Philippines, for instance, or in South Korea. The more ecstatic Kremlinologists insist that the Soviet economy is reeling, *perestroika* isn't working, the provinces are in revolt and Gorbachev could be on the next plane to the Hoover Institute if he does not mind his Ps and Qs, or their equivalent in Cyrillic script. A conservative National Security Council in the next four years might decide to really stick it to the Russians and bring the system down; a liberal one might try to exploit and co-opt the system with increased trade, technology transfers, competitive exchanges of ballet companies ("I'll see your Moisiyev and raise you a Mark Morris"). Already Dukakis has begun his inevitable swing to the right on foreign policy. During the Democratic platform hearings last month, he dismayed the Jackson team by retreating from positions he had taken during the early primaries, against the war in Angola, against the Nicaraguan *contras*, on a nuclear testing moratorium with the Soviet Union and on "deep cuts" in strategic arms. It's clear now that under Dukakis *or* Bush the cold war is likely to be carried on—by other means, if not the old means.

A school of thought, or at least a seminar of opinion, has started in the past few months, which holds that the next period will be characterized by the end of the cold war, as we knew and loved it, over the past forty years. The man elected in November, whoever he is, will thus become the

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first post-cold war President. But while it's true that superpower relations may change, the seminarians ignore an elementary principle, which is that the cold war was not primarily about the Soviet military "threat" but about the preservation of Western capitalism and the American system. Anti-Communism provided the principles around which political repression, economic intervention and imperial expansion—indeed, the entire social order—have been organized and managed in the lifetimes of most of the people now voting for President. Soviet behavior may change the texture of the myth by which America lives, but it does not avert the necessity to wage counterrevolution. Until the basis of American foreign policy changes in relation to the Third World as well as the Second; until domestic policy changes its class and racial attitudes; until the left has a legitimate role in the political dynamic; until growth is driven by a commitment to improve the quality of life rather than to expand wasteful consumption and to make war profits; the cold war is here to stay.

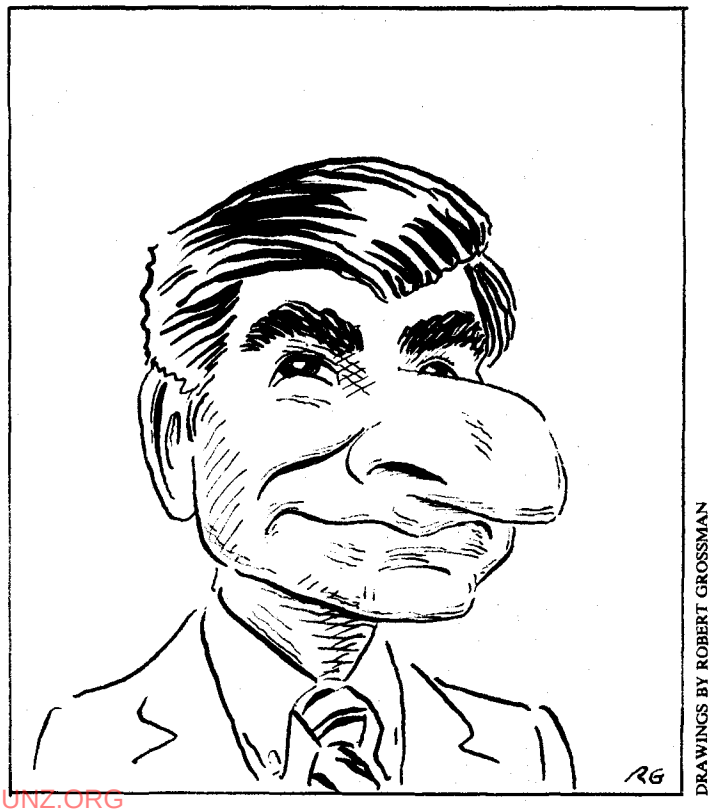
Ideologically, the End-of-Cold-War formulation is akin to the End-of-Ideology theory, which was all the rage when Michael Dukakis was starting out in politics. End of Ideology, as formulated by Daniel Bell in 1960, was the theoretical basis for anti-Communist liberalism in America after the steamy cold war days of Joe McCarthy and John Foster Dulles. Bell argued that class conflict was anachronistic, that a new social contract could now be written between owners and workers, that the rise of the new middle class with old-fashioned religious values changed everything and that anti-Communism was a banner to which all honorable men could repair. Race was not an important factor in the equation.

End of Cold War is already the integument of a liberal ideology for the period after Reagan, Elliott Abrams, the Moral Majority and supply-side economics. When Dukakis insists that there is no underclass, he is in effect arguing that class conflict is obsolete, as it must be for anyone whose social philosophy is so exultantly stamped with the words "Made It in America." That same philosophy is instinctively Social Darwinist in its veneration for the iron laws of self-help to success or irresponsibility to ruin. Furthermore, neoliberal political economists maintain that the rise of a new Reagan class of free-market entrepreneurs and deregulated capitalists changed everything, that the old liberal insistence on full employment, redistribution and public-sector development is now passé. Hence Dukakis's firm refusal to give in to Jackson on tax proposals that would tap—not even soak—the rich.

As President, Dukakis's principal project would be to oversee economic growth. He speaks compassionately about helping the poor, the homeless, the lame and the halt, but he is offering little in the way of social spending programs. "Leveraged liberalism" is his way to get the corporate sector to contribute to cheap pilot programs and make small investments in the tiny bull's-eye of target areas. But economic expansion is the fun part.

The Massachusetts model must be carefully examined in the campaign ahead, for Dukakis continues to raise it as an example for national economic policy. In Massachusetts, as is increasingly clear, Dukakis didn't exactly produce growth as much as he managed it. Contrary to his sole economic plank, the "success" of Massachusetts is not exportable. For one thing, high-tech growth along Route 128 (or in Silicon Valley) spurted because of decline in other sectors. Both ends of the seesaw cannot rise at the same time. The Carter-Reagan military buildup helped enormously: From 1980 to 1985, prime military contracts in the state rose from $3.7 billion to $7.7 billion, accounting for 7 percent of the gross state product in 1987, which was more than its share in 1968 at the Vietnam War's high point. So did the labor shortage (left over from the long years of depression in the state), the massive educational infrastructure and the decline in union membership and militancy because of the previous conditions of decline.

Although some gross figures out of the state belie the truth, the details illustrate serious—perhaps fatal—contradictions in the model. The low rate of unemployment reflects a very low rate of expansion in the work force. New workers are not flooding into Boston, because they can't afford to live there. Eastern Massachusetts, which is where the boom is, has one of the highest costs of living in the country. Nor are they moving to other parts of the state, because there are no jobs there. As the economists Ben Harrison and Jean Kluver have made clear, nearly all the growth in the state attributable to "local advantage" (i.e., conditions on which local managers and policy-makers could have an effect) is concentrated in business and legal services, finance, insurance, real estate and especially construction: what the economist R.D. Norton has called "Manhattanization." So at bottom, the Massachusetts Miracle is only a boom in the Boston-Lowell-Lawrence triangle, and one which most




DRAWINGS BY ROBERT GROSSMAN

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working-class people (as opposed to the Dukakis class of executives and entrepreneurs) can't enjoy—because they can't afford the rents and prices. As a result, the state's competitive edge is disappearing.

If Dukakis cannot keep military spending up to the levels necessary to continue the Reagan boom and maintain the present exchange-rate mercantilism, and if he is forced by social conditions (not to mention his electorate) to increase public-sector expenditures, and if he refuses to increase taxes on a redistributive formula, and if he cannot reduce the various commercial and consumer debt loads—he's in for a lot of trouble. What's worse, his instincts in moments of crunch are not liberal, compassionate, expansionist or even equitable. In the mid-1970s, when faced with a budgetary imbalance, he froze social programs, raised taxes on a regressive basis and pleaded for support and sympathy from corporate execs and liberals alike. Both refused his entreaties. The new social contract he had drawn up could not be enforced. Is there any reason to believe those now marching in his short shadow will do any better? □

WHERE DO JESSE'S PEOPLE GO?

# The Rainbow and The Democrats

ANDREW KOPKIND

The back of the bus was a breeding ground for much of the theory and strategy of Jesse Jackson's campaign for the presidency, and riding there one day toward the end of the primary season, on a long stretch between interchangeable events, the small cadre of staff members began talking with the candidate about the future of the Rainbow movement. Should the campaign fold into the Democratic Party, remain a kind of external caucus ("a progressive adrenal gland on the sluggish Democratic kidney," someone had said) or make a clean break and become a party in its own right? Jackson spoke up. He would be in favor of a third party—provided that his could be the Democratic one. Sam Nunn and that ilk could go off and have their own party if they wanted to. But the Democratic Party was too important and too powerful to leave to the enemies of progress.

Jackson did not take over the party this year, or achieve that order of realignment, although he has already changed politics in ways that few predicted at the start and that will be extremely difficult to reverse. Barring a bolt from the blue in Atlanta, Jackson will not be on the Democratic ticket, his major platform demands (class-angled taxation, military build-down and conversion to civilian production, a national health system) will not be accepted and the cadres in his campaign will not be given top jobs by Michael Dukakis's side. Party delegate-selection rules may be eased to allow greater grass-roots representation in 1992, but the party elders are not about to give their baby over to the rabble. Dukakis is likely to reject structural power-sharing with Jackson's coalition and instead personalize his overtures to Jackson himself, so as to undercut the institutional power of the Rainbow and at the same time win over its voters as individuals. That's the Duke's style.

But Jackson has already "created facts on the ground," as the Israelis say. He won 6.7 million votes in the primary round, against Dukakis's 9.7 million, although the delegate lineup does not reflect that remarkable success. He won in many of the major cities of America (including New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Houston), much of the Deep South and many important "demographics," including a majority of all voters between the ages of 18 and 29. Again, he raised the level of political excitement and brought thousands of politically inactive people into the political process. The strength that comes from those achievements should not be underestimated, nor is it a gift to the lazy leaders of the party to do with as they will. At best it lays the groundwork for a Democratic transformation that will affect the character, leadership and historic role of the party.

Jackson's apparently coy but reportedly genuine bid for "serious consideration" as Dukakis's running mate may have been partly a gambit to keep his campaign alive in the media during the dull days between California and Atlanta. Many busybodies and know-it-alls were hectoring him to pull out of the race after New York and Pennsylvania, even, as if he were no more than a Babbitt or a Gore (remember them?). But his request for consideration also represented a serious demand for power-sharing, which has always been the long-term goal of the campaign. Perhaps there were a few moments—between the Michigan caucuses and the Wisconsin primary—when Jackson and his supporters indulged their fondest fantasy of winning the nomination, but they always knew that the dream was impossible. At best, the campaign could organize a force mighty enough to demand a share of power in the general election campaign, in the Democratic Party and in the next Democratic Administration. And that best would be very good indeed.

Power-sharing in the party would give progressives access to money, media, lists, jobs and state organizations—the stuff of institutional permanence and the wherewithal for future campaigns. If Jackson were to be the party chair, as some have suggested, he could command not only a platform but an apparatus with which to continue his efforts. Power-sharing in the campaign would offer some of the same advantages to the Jackson team, and put leaders of the coalition (blacks, farmers, militant unionists, leftists, lesbians and gays) in significant national roles with maximum exposure. And in a Dukakis Administration, Jackson's people at various departmental levels could profoundly influence policy, purpose and direction—and the ongoing organization of the grass-roots movement.

The power-sharing argument is an alternative to the conventional third-party proposition, in which the progressive wing (or winglet) sharpens its positions and solidifies its membership far outside the corridors of power. Power-sharing could allow the active minority to use available

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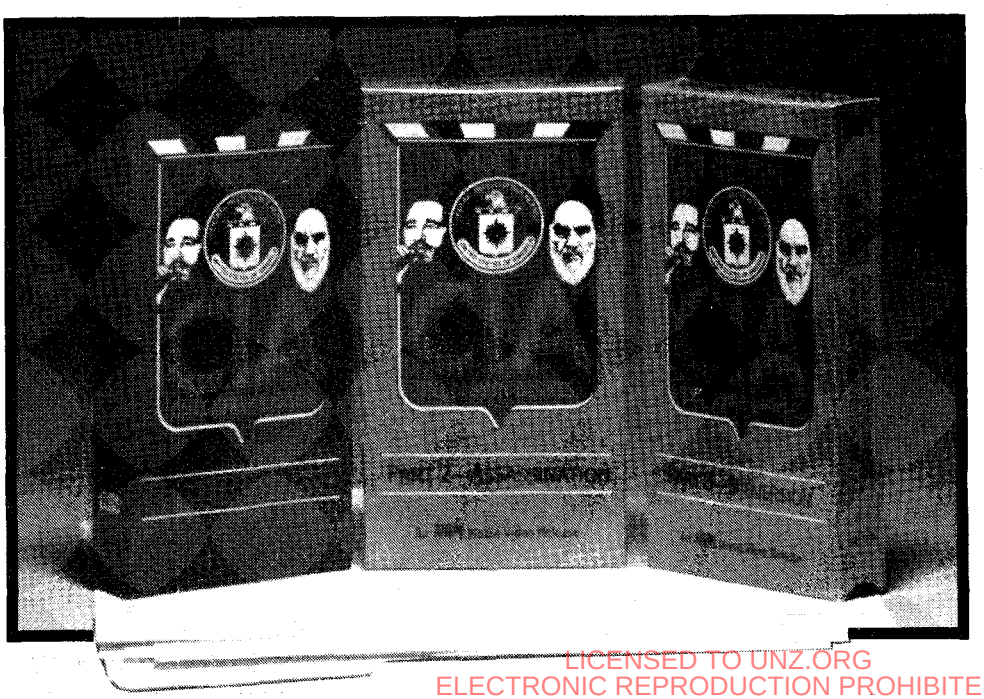

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structures to further its goals. The danger (and likelihood) of the third-party model is permanent marginalization. The danger of power-sharing is co-optation.

But however much Jackson has "earned" his share, he is not going to get it from Dukakis and the party without a fight. The reasons are obvious. Some party leaders may say they fear a white backlash in November if any good deals are cut with the black candidate, but in fact they fear the loss of their own power a lot more. The Jackson campaign really does represent a struggle between established and insurgent forces, with antecedents before this election and consequences beyond the next one. In cities such as New York, in states such as Vermont, in labor unions such as the United Automobile Workers, within minority communities, around controversial issues and for local elections, the Jackson campaign drew on, defined, promoted and left behind battles for the empowerment of excluded, oppressed and outsider elements—in a society where such conflicts are not even admitted to by conventional politicians. Dukakis, for instance, won't even countenance the category of the "underclass," because to acknowledge the existence of class would be to subvert his strategy for governing as well as campaigning.

Late in the spring, the purveyors of Conventional Wisdom discovered that the Jackson campaign was something like a "movement," with a dynamic quite different from an ordinary political contest. The C.W. crowd, however, has so far failed to foresee what happens to a movement when it must defer the dream it first projects. Does it dry up like that raisin in the sun? Does it explode in a shattering display of egos, personal agendas and delusions of importance? Certainly that is possible in this case. The Jackson campaign has not been terribly deferential to the independent organizing plans put forth by the National Rainbow Coalition, which in fact laid the groundwork for Jackson's campaign in recent years. There are local Rainbows in many states, but Jackson has tended to divert their efforts into his national campaign over the past year. The Rainbow organizers are known to favor independence from the Democratic Party when the chips go down after the convention this summer. Relations between the coalition and the campaign became so strained at times that one leader of the Rainbow would not speak to another top man in the campaign.

Nor have campaign theorists been able to present a clear strategy for the future, to which supporters might adhere. Jackson himself seems to be invigorated by spontaneous responses to opportunities and incidents that appear from day to day. He is a good organizer, an astute manipulator of power and a tireless campaigner. But above all he can size up and seize a moment. He is at his best leading a march in McFarland, California; walking through the housing projects of Detroit; joining a picket line in Jay, Maine; or addressing a gay rally in Greenwich Village. If the movement is to survive and thrive, it will need the efforts and energies of many from the various groups that formed the coalition as well as those unaffiliated activists who joined the campaign because of its historic importance this year. Jackson has promised to mount a voter registration drive this summer, to raise money and to continue speaking for his agenda. But the movement will not be identical with the campaign; in many ways it has to go beyond Jesse Jackson and set its sights on a national presidential contest in 1992. And it has to be developed by all parts of the coalition: by the state Rainbow Coalitions, by the Jay strikers, the McFarland field workers, the Greenfield, Iowa, farmers, the Greenwich Village gays, the New York City coalition against Mayor Koch, the Detroit insurgents against Mayor Coleman Young. . . . And the list is in formation.

The surprising success of the local Rainbow Coalition in Vermont could set an example for the national movement. Vermont is the least black and most rural state in the Union, one of the least populous, least centralized and most Republican in presidential preference—Lyndon Johnson was the only Democrat in history to win its pocketful of electoral votes—but one of the most progressive in local affairs. In other words, it stands as a small but significant contradiction to conventional notions about the ingredients for political realignment, the possibilities of reform and the chances for real change. There are no large blocs of minorities and union members who will automatically support liberal candidates and progress. There is no dense and volatile urban population that can be manipulated by populist rhetoric to seize power and remove incumbent officeholders. There is no strong Democratic machine that can organize an electorate. And yet, the course of recent political history in this corner of the country suggests that activists on the progressive/populist left can create a new majority within the Democratic Party, redefine the limits of political action and reasonably expect to win elections on the highest level.

Jesse Jackson won the Vermont caucuses on the same day that Michael Dukakis won the New York primary—even after Dukakis had become the consensus candidate of the media and the political elites. Organization rather than candidate charisma made the difference. Then, at the Democratic state convention five weeks later, the Jackson forces utterly swamped the party establishment, liberal though it was. Hundreds of new activists thronged the meeting, kicked out the entrenched real estate lawyer who had been national committeeman, installed a young gay activist in his place and passed a set of platform recommendations listing demands on everybody's progressive agenda, from redistributive taxes to a Palestinian homeland. "We liked to say over the last four years that the Rainbow was the tail that wagged the Democratic dog," one of the delegates said later. "Now we are the dog."

It was back in '84 that issues activists around the state made the decision (out of character and difficult at the time) to enter Democratic Party politics for Jackson's first national effort. The candidate did so well in the caucuses that year that the Vermont Jackson delegation to the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco was one of the largest—proportionately, of course—among the states. The rather monochromatic Vermont Rainbow Coalition (the very name still makes outsiders smile) got its leader elected as the state's national committeewoman, helped elect several members and friends to the State Legislature and, after the

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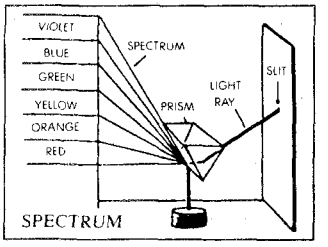


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election, continued working to reorganize Vermont politics.

While the Rainbow is far from the dominant political force in Vermont now, it is both securely established and poised for expansion; there's no magic key to growth beyond energetic organizing work, but that depends on a national support system as well as local conditions. Its influence extends beyond its membership, its elected officials and even beyond the bloc of votes upon which it can depend. As primarily whites for Jackson, it has profoundly affected the way Vermonters encounter the dilemma of race. It wins some electoral and legislative victories, it is an important determinant in policy debates (involving growth, agriculture, taxes and utilities, for example), it is accepted but not co-opted by the Democratic Party, and perhaps most important of all, it has helped create a political culture that is supportive and sustaining—a bulwark against the alienating and isolating elitist culture that characterizes politics almost everywhere else.

The elitist liberal model of politics asks only that voters silently and secretly tick off a name on a ballot. Thereafter, winning politicians are accountable to no one but their inner circle of advisers and contributors. The radical democratic model demands that citizens participate in the creation of a base of power and an agenda of programs, which the politicians dare not betray.

They used to say in the civil rights movement of the 1960s that "the people need victories" to keep going in what is always a bitter and frustrating endeavor. Jackson says over and over that the people need hope, which is also a kind of victory. But if the campaign to win power in the nation's political institutions is to grow, those who join must have the reasonable expectation of some payoff for their efforts. If they can't get a big piece of the pie Dukakis controls this year, they will have to win some of those battles in the farm belt, the big cities, the states, the unions, the schools and workplaces, the points of production and consumption. A complete movement creates useful activities and a political culture that will carry its members through the long years on the margins of power.

No matter how successful Jackson is in getting a share of power for himself or his campaign this year, he has demonstrated that an expanded electorate and a coalition of the disempowered is the only likely route for progressive politics in the foreseeable future. Democrats who will not or cannot expand the party to include that half of the population that does not now participate (and that would in great measure support progressive programs), and candidates who offer no plan for the reorganization of power at the base, will be stuck in the center and dependent on the interests of the corporate class that dominates politics. They are obliged to cater to the most regressive "swing" constituencies in the electorate, as Dukakis has been told he must. They must make unseemly compromises with racism (however humane their rhetoric) in order to placate the swing voters, who—surprise!—turn out to be white and conservative. Such candidates may win, but they cannot make change. In boom times and in periods of low-intensity social conflict (e.g., in Massachusetts in the mid-1980s) they may deliver modest benefits to the needy and civilized management for the middle class. But they cannot, and will not, attempt the kind of *perestroika* that progressives glimpsed this year for the first time in almost a half-century of trial and failure.

The search for "new ideas" that occupied Democrats during the 1984 primary season turned up nothing but recycled or repackaged old ideas. This year there are enough new ideas around to choke a horse, but they belong to an entirely different political project. There is the idea of conversion from a military to a civilian economy, the idea of realigning U.S. foreign policy with the forces of independence in the Third World, the idea of public control of corporate behavior in the social sphere, the idea of universal health care, the idea of redistribution of wealth and power, the idea of democratizing the processes of politics, the idea of empowering the powerless. Unfortunately, those are not the kinds of ideas that the people who finance and direct the established Democratic Party believe should be tried or even mentioned in genteel company. You will not find them written in the party's platform or contained in such legislation as a putative Democratic President may offer in the next four years.

Already, small freelance "brain trusts" are forming to insert their ideas and exert influence in the campaign, the transition period next winter and in the new Administration [see David Corn on page 54]. They've been refining their new policies—which are for the most part different from new ideas—for a long time. But they are largely detached from a mass power base, which is essential to the realization of serious proposals for change. Dukakis may give a few of their members jobs (as he did in Massachusetts), but they are likely to become hostages to the same centrist forces at the top that darkened the dreams of liberals in the first months of the Carter Administration.

What that suggests is that ideas without institutionalized power are fragile flowers that fall in the first frost of *Realpolitik*. The Jackson campaign has produced important proposals for change, but more than that it has been a campaign to organize power. It will not continue on its own. The campaign so far has been a prelude to a possible movement, and the choice to wither away or fight for the future must be made in the next few weeks.

To be credible after Atlanta, the Jackson faction must fight for power at the convention even if it must lose the big battles to the party establishment, which has superior numbers there. Fighting is itself a way of gathering strength, as the civil rights movement showed. If the Jackson campaign allows itself to be folded into the Democratic Party like egg whites into a soufflé, it will have betrayed all those who put their faith in and pinned their hopes on empowerment.

It is possible that many delegates may be angry enough to bolt—when the "bland" Dukakis platform (as Jackson himself called it) is adopted, when delegate-selection reform is compromised or when a conservative is picked as the vice-presidential candidate to "balance" the ticket and appeal to the erstwhile Reagan voters. Third-party talk is increasingly popular in Rainbow circles. But if they stay, the Jackson forces must make it clear that their project is not dead when

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the lights go out in Georgia, that plans for creating a new majority, for realigning the party and for winning power will continue after the general election campaign and during the next Administration, whoever forms it. □

MY FELLOW AMERICANS

# What I'd Say If They Asked Me

*Ever concerned with raising the level of political discourse in this country, we asked novelist Kurt Vonnegut to compose an acceptance speech for Michael Dukakis. Of course, writers have contributed to presidential oratory in the past, but their efforts were lost in the revision-by-committee process. Here's the real thing, unfiltered and undiluted.*

KURT VONNEGUT

I am here to serve the people of the United States of America—all of them, in all ways which are lawful.

I will not now speak of my humbleness. It has been said with some truth, I suppose, that almost anyone can grow up to be President. I have to add, "But surely not an humble child." The Presidency is simultaneously a pinnacle of power and of vanity, and God help us all.

An aspect of my vanity, which seems to have found favor with a majority of those who chose to vote, is my belief that, with the help of the fourth branch of government mentioned in our Constitution, "We the people," I can do a lot to help the United States of America become the United States of America—at last, at last.

The echo of Martin Luther King in my words is intentional when I say, "At last, at last."

It will do us no harm today, as it has surely done no harm to other nations I need not name, to acknowledge a past soiled with atrocities, including, in our case, slavery and genocide, and the treatment of women of whatever race under law as though they were not citizens but property. Let us celebrate how far we have come from such bad old days in so short a time, and measure how far we have yet to go.

What better measurement might we use for progress made and progress yet to come than the health and happiness and wisdom and safety of all our people? And make no mistake about it: This nation is the most astonishing and admirable experiment in pluralistic democracy in history. Because of our wealth, the fairness of our Bill of Rights and the openness of our long borders, every conceivable sort of human being is now an American.

We are the world.

There is much in the recent past I would undo, if I could, especially our overwhelming national debt, whose undoing will be slow and painful. I will try to find out what good things, if any, we bought with all that money, borrowed mostly from foreigners. I will report back to you, whose children and grandchildren must pay it back with interest. I will be surprised, as I am sure most of you will be, too, if I find many purchases our descendants might thank us for.

With your encouragement, and with the cooperation of your elected representatives, I will attempt, after listening to the best-informed advisers I can find, to give future generations reasons to think well of us after all. There you have it, the principal mission of my administration: to create and bequeath to the future a decent habitat for all, free of poisons, free of hunger, free of ignorance, free of hate.

Too much, too much?

*Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,*
*Or what's a heaven for?*

Those are the words of Robert Browning, of course. I can put it a lot less elegantly, if you like:

*Company's coming! Let's clean up this mess.*

Many of the poisons in the water and the air and the topsoil are new. One which can sicken our spirit is ancient, and only since World War II has this country begun to fight it with any seriousness: the idea that females and persons of color are second-class citizens. That poison would love to make a great big comeback, to take its lethal place alongside nerve gas and radioactive wastes and PCBs and crack, and DDT and Agent Orange and the AIDS virus, and on and on.

Not while I'm President. In the words of Patrick Henry:

*If* this *be treason, make the most of it.*

Am I proposing a redistribution of wealth? You bet, since the wealth is being redistributed in any case, and often most crazily, and against the national interest. Am I proposing that we tax and tax and spend and spend? Yes, I am. Virtually every transaction is being skimmed already, and some

*Kurt Vonnegut is a novelist and author most recently of* Bluebeard *(Dell).*

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private persons have done this at such confiscatory rates as to become as rich as smaller sovereign nations in a few years' time. And they spend and spend. On what? On what?

Ah, me.

Am I proposing an enormous public works program? How else might we describe our military-industrial complex, so mistrusted by that great Republican, General of the Armies Dwight David Eisenhower, when he himself became our President? With your encouragement I want to take much of the money now going into that public works program, and invest it instead in the arts of peace, the noblest of which are public health and education.

Who says otherwise? And why?

Company's coming.

I thank you for your attention. □

POLICY PAPERS PROLIFERATE

# Battle of the Brain Trusts

DAVID CORN

The fight for Michael Dukakis's (take your pick) soul, mind or ear is on. That's the belief of a number of progressive policy jocks who are currently compiling reams of initiatives to place before him after he ascends to the White House. They all remember the loud thud that shook Washington in 1980 when *Mandate for Leadership*, 3,000 pages of conservative prescriptions assembled by the Heritage Foundation, hit President-elect Reagan's desk.

Progressive policy entrepreneurs now think it may soon be their turn. The possibility of a change in the White House has touched off a flurry of activity within several left-of-center organizations. The Democracy Project has in motion a project and report going by the same name, *Blueprints for America: Transition '89*. The Institute for Policy Studies plans to release a 422-page progressive agenda, *Winning America: Ideas and Leadership for the 1990s*, at the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta. The World Policy Institute has a well-funded but so far nameless undertaking that will draft a "national security" agenda for the next President. The Economic Policy Institute recently conducted a conference on "The First 100 Days." The Advocacy Institute plans to conduct how-to sessions for progressives who want to push their way into the presidential transition process. Single-issue advocates—like arms control groups—have their own schemes to color the agenda of the next regime.

The range of these and other policy peddlers (all officially nonpartisan) runs the ideological gamut of the Democratic Party. Although some of the ideas and experts overlap from one group to another, several distinct bands appear along the spectrum. I.P.S., with its more sweeping, ideological vision, falls into the Jacksonian—as in Jesse—liberal band. Next there are the more pragmatically oriented groups, such as the Democracy Project, which tend to offer more specific fixes and worry about how they will get Dukakis to do this or that. Within these organizations can be found a type of progressive that one could simplistically dub New Liberal. Then there are establishment figures, such as former Democratic Party chair Robert Strauss, and centrist groups, like the bipartisan American Agenda, lying in wait for the nominee.

I.P.S.'s grand alternatives are offered in *Winning America*, a collection of thirty-eight essays, each with proposed policies and suggested presidential nominees. America is in peril, the book's introduction says, "careening toward disaster." What's needed is no less than fundamental change—or, as Marcus Raskin, I.P.S. fellow and co-editor of the book, puts it, "social reconstruction." A $50 billion cut in the military budget, a 30-hour work week (with no reduction in pay), a tax hike for the well-heeled, a federally funded health system—these are just a few of the many actions it urges. "Some people within the Dukakis Administration will be interested in it," Raskin predicts. But the I.P.S. people do not expect Dukakis to grab for it as soon as the votes are tallied. With *Winning America*, the intent of I.P.S. appears to be more in providing an embodiment of progressive values and policies than in shaping the early days of the Dukakis era.

In hotter pursuit of Dukakis is the Democracy Project, run by Mark Green, a writer, consumer advocate and 1986 Democratic candidate for Senator from New York. Democracy Project (which has an annual budget roughly 2.5 percent of Heritage's) has signed up about fifty mostly left-leaning policy experts to contribute sections to the *Blueprints for America* report—due out after the election. It bears a strong but antithetical resemblance to *Mandate for Leadership*, with each specialist writing a section on how to de-Reaganize a particular agency of government and use it for progressive ends. Here, party centrists (such as Ted Sorensen and Stuart Eizenstat, who recently lauded the Reagan military buildup) mingle with advocates for the poor (Robert Greenstein of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund), "economic Democrats" (housing authority Derek Shearer), industrial policy fans (economist Robert Reich) and dovish Democrats (former Carter arms control adviser Paul Warnke and Sovietologist Stephen F. Cohen).

At an invitation-only conference held last month (when the Democrats were completing their controversy-free platform), *Blueprints* contributors provided a preliminary view of their agenda. The event produced a well-mixed brew, or perhaps just a mishmash, of liberal standards, a small number of innovative progressive-sounding ideas and a few decidedly illiberal notions. At times there was a clash between the New Liberalism—which tends to advocate practical reforms, sometimes creative, sometimes not, designed to work within existing political limits—and traditional (occasionally big-government-minded) progressive liberalism.

Here's one example of the collision: David Koplow, an arms controller in the Carter Administration whose fixation

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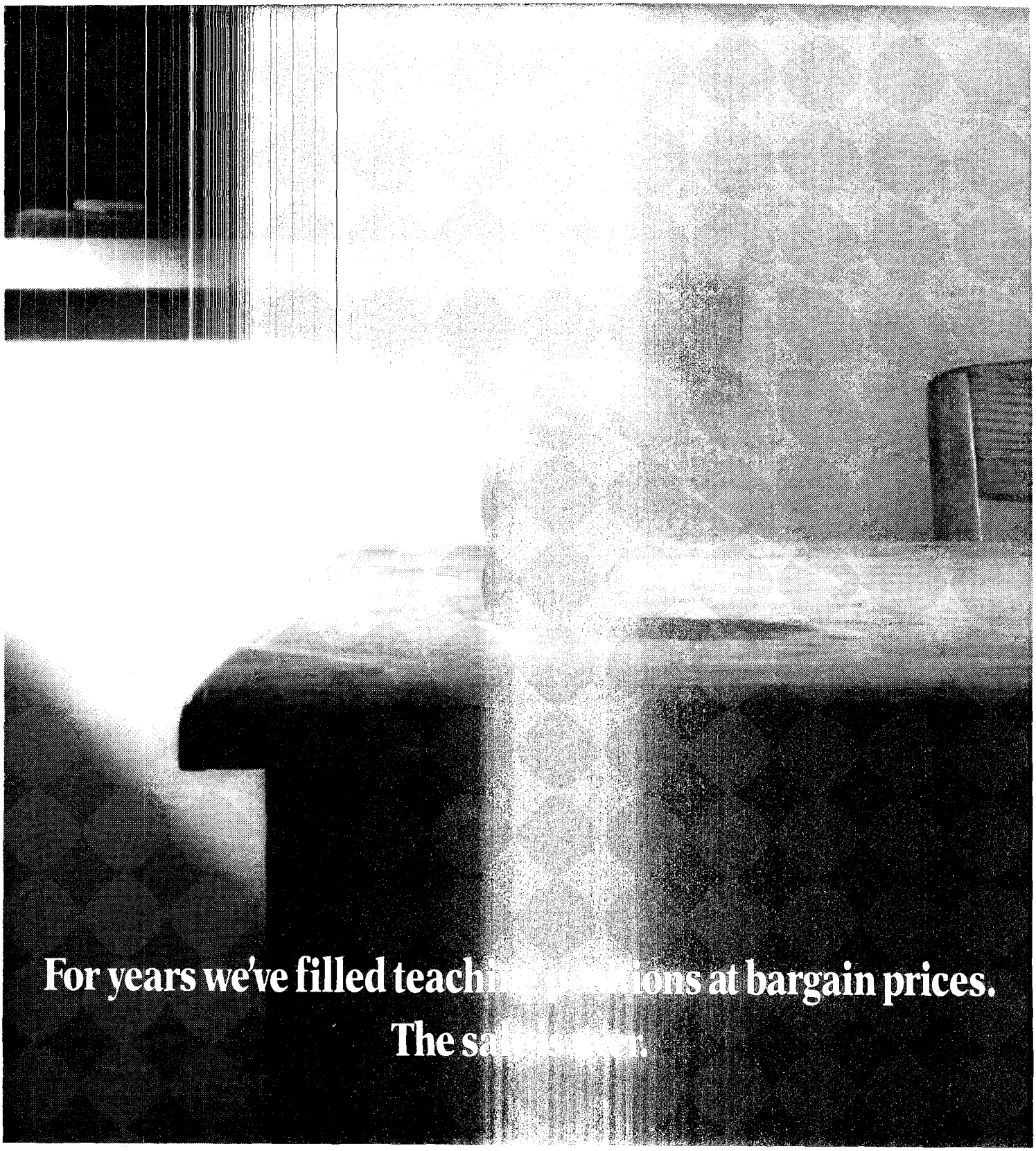


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on technical matters, though nothing new, lends itself to the New Liberal label, spoke on the need to make "crisis stability" the overriding priority in crafting a nuclear weapons policy. That prompted Stephen F. Cohen to observe, "The weaponization of thinking has affected progressives." His policy prescription: "We absolutely must stop the arms race."

In a traditional mode, Greenstein called for a rise in the minimum wage and expanding earned-income tax credit for the working poor. Roscoe Brown, president of Bronx Community College, proposed a comprehensive and costly education platform that included doubling financial aid for college students. On macroeconomic issues, Jeff Faux (of the Economic Policy Institute) and others urged a two-track policy of gradual deficit reduction and growth that would allow for the needed social spending. Drawing some hoots from the crowd was Washington attorney Kenneth Feinberg's suggestion that liberals sacrifice gun control (and the right give up the death penalty) in order to achieve a vague "bipartisan criminal-justice law enforcement policy."

The differences between New Liberalism and its more traditional cousin become clearer when the notions advanced at the Democracy Project's "Blueprints for America" conference and in its report *Ideas That Work: 60 Solutions for America's 3rd Century* are set beside I.P.S.'s *Winning America*. *Ideas That Work* (I contributed to an early version of it) is a collection of mainly process-oriented, sometimes innovative, micropolicy proposals.

Compare Koplow's liberal arms control with I.P.S.'s call for a general U.S.-Soviet disarmament treaty, which would include provisions for disbanding the military forces of both sides. On the issue of day care, *Ideas That Work* trumpets as a model a San Francisco law that requires developers to set aside space for child care. *Winning America* calls for universal federally funded day care. There was little mention of any kind of tax rise at the "Blueprints for America" conference. I.P.S. echoes Jackson's demand for more progressive taxes. Green celebrated "progressive partnerships" between business and labor, business and government. There's no such talk in *Winning America*.

New and old liberals can agree on ending *contra* aid, preserving women's right to abortion and taking up the Gorbachev challenge. But in determining how much the structure of society should be changed, they go their separate ways. At the end of the first session at the "Blueprints" conference, America's most famous closet radical, Ralph Nader, exploded in frustration. "We must address the concentration of power and wealth that obstructs us from achieving the prudent application of our intelligence for a more humane society," he nearly shouted, excoriating the influence of "corporate power." He noted the effectiveness of an old Lenin slogan: "Factories to the proletariat; land to the peasants." Nader's embrace of this slogan, moderator Robert Kuttner felt compelled to note, was "facetious"—a description that only further annoyed Nader. "I'm trying to broaden [the discussion]," Nader said. But the aim of the conference wasn't a wide sociopolitical critique; it was to determine how to influence the next White House.

The Economic Policy Institute conference was held for a similar tactical purpose. "We're trying to push Dukakis to avoid Washington's permanent establishment's solution to everything: Cut the deficit, cut the deficit, cut the deficit," says Roger Hickey, communications director of E.P.I. Hickey hopes to rally a brigade of liberal economists to do battle with Democrats like Strauss (a co-chair of the bipartisan National Economic Commission, which is supposed to come up with recommendations for dealing with the deficit), who are expected to march into the Oval Office and tell Dukakis there is nothing to do except retire the debt and cut social spending and economic growth initiatives.

The World Policy Institute also wants a piece of the next President. It has convened an informal group of about fifteen policy experts and political seers to redefine "national security." The growing list of participants includes political consultant Ann Lewis, pundit Hodding Carter 3d, skywatcher Carl Sagan, nuclear freeze creator Randall Forsberg, Stephen F. Cohen and Robert Reich. The institute intends to produce a document that will outline a new holistic version of national security, one that takes into account pressing global economic and environmental concerns.

If the undertaking sounds vague, at this point it is. But in a speech delivered last year on "National Priorities for the 1990s," the institute's president, Archibald Gillies, offered a hint of what may emerge. In that address Gillies proposed, among other things, financing development (not just collecting on loans) in the Third World, establishing an international central bank and redirecting $1 trillion over the next ten years from military to economic initiatives. The question the institute seeks to answer is, If the United States cashes in its cold war bonds, what can it buy for its citizens with the tremendous windfall?

Whatever answer the World Policy Institute devises, it and other progressive think tanks will be competing with a host of centrists trying to get into the Dukakis tent. The National Economic Commission is due to unleash its recommendations in December. The Center for National Policy, whose steering committee includes former chair of the Federal Reserve Paul Volcker, retired Adm. Bobby Inman and others, plans to present to the President-elect working papers identifying policy options for "central agenda items." Then there's American Agenda, with the middle-of-the-road muscle of Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Henry Kissinger, Brent Scowcroft and others, co-directed by Stuart Eizenstat. This "study group" will propose to the next President "a realistic bipartisan consensus on what needs to be done," according to Ford. At the Brookings Institution and other think tanks, policy merchants—many of them Carter Administration vets—are itching to pass along their papers to hands close to Dukakis. And don't forget Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government crowd, who, says one outsider, "form a Praetorian Guard around Dukakis."

Will the progressive attempts to influence the Dukakis agenda matter? Dukakis issues adviser Christopher Edley Jr. sent a message to the "Blueprints" conference claiming Dukakis "wants to reach out" to progressives. Liberal activists who have worked with the Duke in Massachusetts have their own message for this group. "Initiatives that cost money or that are new never come from Dukakis," says Judith Meredith, a Boston-based political consultant who

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lobbies for programs for those with low incomes. "An idea has to be ripe, has to have a proven consensus behind it, before he'll get involved." Lew Finfer of the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance is a little more forgiving: "There has been reasonably decent access for people on the progressive end." But what comes after the access?

Dukakis's critics on the left point out that the Governor earnestly listened to those advocating a plant-closings bill and a right-to-know measure (which would provide workers with information about toxic substances in the workplace). Then, in search of consensus, he helped knock the teeth out of these initiatives. (The plant-closing bill he signed called for voluntary, instead of mandatory, notification of factory shutdowns; the right-to-know law was saddled with the provision that workers could not tell anyone, except doctors, under special circumstances, what their employers disclosed about worksite hazards.) "For somebody who has a notion about the better administration of government programs that is not ideological, a Dukakis Administration will be good for them," observes Tom Gallagher, a former State Representative who sponsored the original factory-closing legislation. "If an idea is controversial, if it involves taking a side between capital and labor, forget it. Not listening to people is not the problem with Dukakis and his staff. The problem is they'll listen to everyone and then not take a stand." However, Gallagher and other Dukakis naysayers concede that the Duke did in one instance champion what seemed to be a losing cause—universal health insurance for state residents—and made it happen.

Richard Cauchi of the Boston-based Citizens for Participation in Political Action has what may be an important observation for the Washington liberals hoping to hook Dukakis. Cauchi cites as typical his group's experience in trying to get Dukakis to support a voting rights measure it has pushed: "We're told, 'Yes, it's a good idea, but Dukakis won't lobby for it or make any public statements until it gets to his desk.'"

Dukakis administration officials praise the receptive style encouraged and practiced by their chief. But they always mention the "two Cs"—caution and consensus. "You won't see Michael Dukakis jumping on any bandwagons," says one. Their message is, don't expect Dukakis to pick up a great notion just because it is a great notion and run with it.

A good guess is that the New Liberal process-oriented reforms are closest to Dukakis's nonideological heart. But predictions of whom he will listen to and what will make his agenda can only be unreliable. "Everyone adjusts to the power structure once they get to Washington," observes Nader. He doesn't believe Dukakis will be any exception. Nader's warning should give progressive policy professionals pause. Still, it shouldn't deter them from jumping into the fray. What's to lose? They have spent a long time wandering in the Reagan desert. A Dukakis presidency might be the oasis. But if it turns out to be a mirage—a somewhat liberal President captured by the centrists—the progressive policy elite will confront a new challenge: how to remain politically potent without a foil as clear-cut as Ronald Reagan. □

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LATINO POLITICS

# The Focus Is on Foreign Policy

MARIA DE LOS ANGELES TORRES

For the past decade, events in Latin America have played a critical role in U.S. foreign policy. As the 1988 U.S. presidential election approaches, Latin America remains at the heart of public debate, and the presidential candidates have conducted an unprecedentedly aggressive campaign to woo Latino voters. According to a 1987 Census Bureau report, 7.5 percent of the U.S. population—some 18.8 million people—are now of Latin American origin.

Although Latinos in the past have had an uneven record of voter registration and turnout, they have been the margin of victory in some vital contests, such as Texas gubernatorial races and Chicago mayoral elections. According to Representative Bill Richardson, 85 percent of the Latino population is concentrated in nine states, which possess 193 electoral votes—more than two-thirds of the 270 needed to elect the President. This year's election will see an unprecedented get-out-the-vote campaign among Latinos.

Traditionally, the Latino community has focused on bread-and-butter domestic and social issues, where it is easy to build a consensus. Foreign policy questions have concerned only a minority of conservatives such as the Cuban-Americans of Miami, on whose votes George Bush will be counting this November. But that picture is changing.

Many Latinos, including members of the right-wing Cuban-American National Foundation, have begun to abandon the sinking ship of Reagan Administration policies. Having faithfully supported aid to the *contras*, Radio Martí and the Caribbean Basin Initiative, they are now searching for a new home in the Democratic Party, where they hope to resuscitate these floundering projects. However, they will find that other Latino Democrats—including a growing number of Cuban-Americans—have begun to forge a quietly effective progressive lobby on foreign policy issues. Their voice will be much in evidence at the party's convention in Atlanta this month.

Latino lobbying within the Democratic Party started in 1972, when Polly Baca—today vice chair of the Democratic National Committee, in those days director of the Spanish-speaking division—persuaded the party to adopt planks on U.S.-Mexican relations and immigration. This was a response to a groundswell of community movements such as La Raza Unida, which had established contact between local leaders and Mexican government officials. In the late 1970s Cuban-Americans, encouraged by President Jimmy Carter's search for a rapprochement with Castro, reached agreements with Cuban officials on the release of political prisoners, family reunification, travel to the island and cultural exchange programs. The Cuban-American Committee, a liberal Washington, D.C.-based group, presented the State Department with a petition of more than ten thousand signatures calling for the normalization of relations with Cuba. Members of the committee also joined the Hispanic-American Democrats, founded in 1980 as the first attempt within the party to unify Latinos under a single banner.

By 1984, Latinos felt strong enough to boycott the first ballot at the San Francisco Democratic Convention in protest of the party's refusal to oppose policies later incorporated into the Simpson-Rodino Immigration Reform and Control Act, which demanded sanctions against employers who hired undocumented alien workers. Mario Obledo, a founder of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and past president of the League of Latin American Citizens, believes that this concern with immigration issues is at the root of Latino interest in foreign policy during the 1980s.

This shift has met with resistance in some quarters. Critics point especially to the failed attempt in 1980 to create a Hispanic Council on Foreign Affairs to influence U.S. policies. According to authors David Ayon and Ricardo Anzaldua Montoya, the council failed because it tried to achieve a bipartisan consensus and because conservative Cuban-American members were "so fanatical in their approach on the issue of Castro as to preclude the possibility of debate." That kind of right-wing pressure may have failed to generate widespread support for Reagan Administration Latin American policies, but it has put a damper on some important national efforts. The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, for example, has studiously avoided making any statements on foreign policy—beyond calls for a more equitable distribution of foreign assistance. "We stick to issues with which we can reach consensus," explains its director, Harry Pachon.

The fear of a right-wing backlash has inhibited a number of Latino leaders. San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros, who was interviewed by Walter Mondale in 1984 as a possible running mate, is one of many who prefer to project themselves as "national unity figures." Just this spring, while chairing a meeting of Latinos preparing an "Issues Agenda" for presidential candidates, Cisneros opposed a majority-supported resolution endorsing the Arias peace plan because, according to project staff member Aida Alvarez, "We were afraid that the Cubans working with us may not be able to sell the document with this resolution in Miami."

Other Latinos, such as Rodolfo de la Garza, director of the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, have warned that the community may lose more than it gains by getting involved in U.S.-Latin American relations. He argues that while Latinos in the United States may feel strong ties to Latin Americans, they generally have less common ground with resentful Latin

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governments. There is a lot of truth in this. Latin American governments have traditionally spurned those who leave for the United States—Mexican émigrés are derided as *pochos* ("half-breeds"), Cubans as *gusanos* ("worms").

Perhaps the most common argument, however, is that concern over foreign policy issues may lead ordinary Latinos to abandon a pressing domestic agenda that includes creation of jobs, improvements in education, health and housing programs, drug rehabilitation and establishing cultural and language rights. Certainly, foreign policy is more of a leadership than a street-level concern. But, as former New Mexico Governor Toney Anaya says, foreign and domestic concerns are intimately connected: "By what logic can any responsible Latino leader support the spending of $5 billion for war-related purposes in all of Central America since 1980, while at the same time cuts in Federal programs have increased U.S. Latino poverty by 25 percent?"

Mario Obledo insists that there are still more compelling reasons for concern with U.S. foreign policy. "We are brothers," he argues. "We have historical links that continue to unite us." Obledo is right: The fact that the Southwest is even part of the United States; that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens; or that there are more than 1 million Cubans in this country—all these are consequences of past U.S. policies toward Latin America. The economic relations between the United States and Latin America hasten a steady northward movement of population, while a second exodus is provoked by repressive military regimes that are propped up by the United States. Immigration policies create and destroy Latino communities, as occurred with the *bracero* programs and the massive deportations of Mexicans in the 1950s. All these factors help shape the life and landscape of the neighborhood, from the goods on the shelves of the local bodega to the labor and consumer markets for local Latino business people—who then make their influence felt by financing local politicians.

During the 1980s a new political space has opened for the discussion of Latin American matters at the grass-roots level. The obsessive nature of Washington's Latin America policies has focused attention on the issue, while at the same time rendering this Administration unusually immune to lobbying. In order to make an impact, then, activists have raised the temperature at the state and local levels, which in turn brings the issue closer to home. Efforts to democratize foreign policy decision-making—for example, by involving local governments in sister-city projects with towns in Nicaragua or liberated zones of El Salvador, and declaring local sanctuaries for Central American refugees—have further broadened the scope of debate.

This expanded focus on foreign policy has coincided with a sharp rise in Latino political activity as a whole. The number of elected Latino officials nationwide increased threefold between 1973 and 1986, to a total of 3,202. Longest serving of the fourteen-member Hispanic Congressional Caucus is Representative Henry Gonzalez of Texas, who was elected in 1961. Once a conservative, Gonzalez has become one of the Reagan Administration's fiercest critics. In 1984 the caucus made its first foreign trip, a two-week visit to seven Latin American countries, including El Salvador and Nicaragua. It has been divided over crucial questions such as *contra* aid, but has at least been willing to play ball with progressives—for instance, by hosting a 1987 press conference for a group of Latino leaders, headed by Toney Anaya, on their return from Central America. The Anaya group urged support for the Arias plan and an end to *contra* funding.

This spring the National Hispanic Leadership Conference, a twelve-year-old coalition of twenty-one groups, produced an issues paper for the Democratic presidential candidates, recommending the elimination of all politically motivated restrictions on travel, intellectual exchange, telecommunications and correspondence across national borders. In a clear allusion to Cuba and Nicaragua, it stressed that "the elements of a relationship with Latin America should include recognition that each country has the right to determine the character of its internal domestic political system free from outside interference. It should also be conducted in a manner consistent with human rights and international and domestic law." The Midwest-Northeast Voter Registration Education Project is another major body stressing foreign policy issues. In its 1988 "Hispanic Agenda," the group called for an end to *contra* aid, expanded economic assistance to Latin America and diplomatic recognition of Cuba.

Are these merely elite concerns or do they also reflect grass-roots Latino opinions? Although part of the base is not easy to poll—comprising nonvoters and noncitizens or resident aliens—some useful poll data is now becoming available. In 1984, for instance, the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project (S.V.R.E.P.) coordinated a set of state and local polls that found that 60 percent of Latino voters questioned outside Miami, with its heavy concentration of anti-Castro Cubans, opposed further *contra* aid. Figures from 1988 show that percentage holding steady. A survey of 330 participants at the annual leadership conference called by the Midwest-Northeast Voter Registration Education Project showed 60 percent in favor of the Arias plan and 71 percent against military aid to the *contras*.

Local foreign policy referendum results confirm this pattern. Thanks to the efforts of a coalition of white progressives, blacks and Latinos, Chicago voters were offered a rare opportunity to register a statement on foreign policy in the 1988 primaries. More than 70 percent of Latino voters favored a referendum urging Governor Jim Thompson to halt the training of Illinois National Guardsmen in Honduras. The Mayor's Commission on Latino Affairs, along with newly elected State Senator Miguel del Valle and Alderman Jesus Garcia—both young, up-and-coming voices in Chicago—took the issue energetically into Latino neighborhoods, with public hearings on the National Guard.

What does all this mean for this summer's national party conventions? Reagan loyalist "Hispanics," as we have seen, are beginning to jump ship. In late May, José Sorzano, former president of the Cuban-American National Foundation (C.A.N.F.) and the top-ranking Cuban-American in the

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Reagan Administration, resigned from his National Security Council post to protest the "abandonment" of the *contra* cause. Others are trying to gate-crash the Democrats. At the initial hearing of the Democratic Platform Committee, Simon Ferro of the C.A.N.F. urged the party to adopt a "get-tough" policy toward Cuba. Other Cuban-Americans have bought their way onto the Democratic Business Council, where seats for individuals go for $10,000 each. And Florida Republican State Representative Annilda Gonzalez Quevedo switched parties after accusing the Republicans of betrayal for negotiating a new immigration agreement with Castro.

But Latino progressives offer a counterweight. Four important groups—the League of Latin American Citizens, S.V.R.E.P., the Cuban-American Committee and PACCA (Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America)—have joined forces over the past year in preparation for the Atlanta convention. Antonio Gonzalez, director of the S.V.R.E.P.'s Latin America project, says, "We will be working with all the Latino delegates at Atlanta, giving them the results of our polls. If the Democrats are interested in the Latino vote, they should take note of our findings." The Cuban-American Committee has submitted a written proposal to the Platform Committee urging the Democrats to negotiate agreements with Cuba that will benefit the Cuban-American community. And PACCA, a national group of scholars that began to lobby Latinos at the 1984 Democratic Convention, has picked up endorsements for its alternative policy proposals from the Mexican-American Political Association and the Hispanic Council of the Illinois Democratic Party.

Prominent Jackson supporter Toney Anaya will be a co-chair at Atlanta. "It appears we will have fewer delegates at the National Convention [than in 1984]," Anaya says, "yet these are the two most committed candidates on Hispanic issues." Jackson's stance on issues of concern to Latino voters, both domestic and international, is well known. But Michael Dukakis's standard foreign policy speech, delivered in impeccable Spanish, also harshly criticizes past U.S. policies in Latin America "that have led to the Batistas, Somozas and Stroessners." Dukakis has vowed to end military aid to the *contras*, reopen a dialogue with Cuba, renegotiate the Latin American debt, give a stronger role to the Organization of American States and appoint Latinos to key foreign policy-making positions. There is some reason to believe his sincerity: He was, after all, one of eight governors who refused to send their state National Guard to Central America. But while Dukakis has also set up a team to reach out to Latino voters, composed of a Cuban-American, a Puerto Rican and a Mexican-American, he did not name any Latinos to the drafting committee and was unwilling to include any strong statements on Latin America in the platform. Even so, says Democratic National Committee vice chair Polly Baca, "U.S.-Latin American relations are part of the Latino agenda, whether or not we succeed in getting stronger language on the platform. Latino voters will be judging the candidates on many issues. One will be how they intend to make U.S. policies toward Latin America more sensitive, compassionate and just." □


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# BOOKS & THE ARTS.

## Kazan, Kazan

ERIC BENTLEY

A LIFE. *By Elia Kazan. Alfred A. Knopf. 848 pp. $24.95.*

Among the 848 pages here, a certain number are inevitably given over to show biz chatter (what my good friend Darryl Zanuck said at 11 A.M. last Tuesday), but don't let that fool you. Kazan has always strained every nerve to make his last show the best, and *A Life* is the carefully planned farewell performance of a very considerable drama. Only the bottom line is simple. The book is a good old-fashioned success story: Greek immigrant makes it in the New World as a star. That story, oh yes, has long been rejected by the American intelligentsia, which found that success is really failure. What Kazan's book does is give this rejection a special twist: the success-that-is-failure can be turned into real success of another kind, the psychoanalytic kind. The voice is that of the patient on the couch; the language, that of the man in the chair, taking notes. The word cure. The theory applied is the Ego Psychology of the generation following Freud. The weak ego of the outwardly successful man who is likely to end up a suicide is replaced by the strong ego of a man who now accepts parts of himself that had previously been repudiated.

The drama of Kazan's *Life* is presented on two planes, the professional and the personal, which are integrated by the theory that the two become one through a common factor: eros. Kazan's profession, the theater, is primarily seen as an erotic phenomenon. The performing artist up there on the stage is flirting with you. Dancer, singer or actor, he or she is offering you what other artists (writers, painters, sculptors) do not offer: his or her own body. If Kazan's work is startling, it is because he reports with what alacrity and persistence Kazan as director took these artists up on their offer, the females at least. If the theory is sound, it is rather hard on the sex the director is not attracted to. On the other hand, *A Life* may well create consternation among parents of stage-struck girls, for it presents the first outright defense of, and rationale for, the "casting director's couch." For a mere reader, there is too much sex in the book. Verbalized sex can be terribly boring, and blunt language, calculated to be racy, comes off macho and aggressive. Above all the word "fuck," a Kazan favorite. (When he encounters a bedroom that accommodates several couples, you know his next line will be, "Where do they fuck?")

The fun in the book (of which there's a lot) is all bedroom comedy. Joe DiMaggio has just proposed to Marilyn Monroe even though he hasn't slept with her yet. She is touched by his idealism, but since he isn't around, hops into bed with Kazan. Kazan, we have his word for it, hated Tallulah Bankhead, whom he directed in *The Skin of Our Teeth*, and she in turn despised him. What a moment, then, when she turns up uninvited in his bedroom and, still unbidden, removes every shred of clothing! Enough narrative already for one good anecdote, but in *A Life* the punch line is yet to come: When Tallulah heads for the bed itself, she finds there's a girl already in it. The only other person Kazan ever hated was, it seems, Lillian Hellman. He reports a couple of occasions when, he thought, she was hoping to seduce him. She would discover that the cook happened to be out that night and, oh dear, they were alone together. She would wear things she thought seductive but he didn't. One wonders what her version of such incidents would be like.

Whether or not we are hearing the truth about Bankhead and Hellman, we are learning a lot about Kazan and, since his own approach is so clinical, it is not unfair to find significance in the fact that both the devils in his life were female. By the time one has finished the book one has also learned that the two devils were matched with two angels and that the angels were female too. There's a whole universe here. At its center, a single male, Kazan himself. In the immediate vicinity, lovely, available girls. At the outer limits, on the one side, the two female devils, on the other the two female angels.

The angels—actually, Kazan calls them saints—were his mother and Molly Day Thacher, his first wife. What is a saint? In Catholicism, there are saints of various kinds. But what our more worldly spirits mean by saintliness tends to be just one thing: long-suffering. Saints put up with us, the non-saintly. In the rambling confession Richard Nixon made to the White House staff the day after he resigned, he called *his* mother a saint. She didn't become President. The non-saint did.

When Kazan tells funny stories, his prose is crisp and uncluttered. The focus is sharp. But when he is serious, he is terribly wary and often seems to be asking himself, How will this passage read to the person I'm writing about? There is a fair amount of eulogy along the lines of politicians' speeches about "my dear friend X" and "that great American Y." Molly is one of the few main characters in his story to stand out boldly and clearly. She was not a saint, but she was bold and clear. I speak now from my memory of the woman.

*Living for Brecht* is the title of a recent book about one of that poet's girlfriends. Girlfriends and wives have, of course, been doing such things for centuries. Molly tried to live for her own playwrighting but it didn't pan out so she lived for Kazan. For her, that was a solution of a sort. A sort that nearly killed her, as Kazan freely admits. He was not good for her except on the principle that pain is good for a masochist. Was she good for him? She certainly did a lot of helping out. And she had a place in his cosmology that probably someone had to fill. Lacking more knowledge and understanding than is in either the book or my memory, I must leave the deeper questions unanswered and proceed to a fact about Molly: She was a political ideologue where her husband was not. And this was crucial in what, alas, still in 1988, and even in his own opinion, appears to have been the central event of Kazan's whole career: his naming of names before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1952. (I say "even in his own opinion," not because he says so in so many words but because of the number of times he refers to the incident, and people's responses thereto, from one end of the book to the other.)

*Eric Bentley included part of Elia Kazan's testimony before HUAC in his documentary play* Are You Now Or Have You Ever Been, *published by Northwestern University Press and broadcast on Showtime.*

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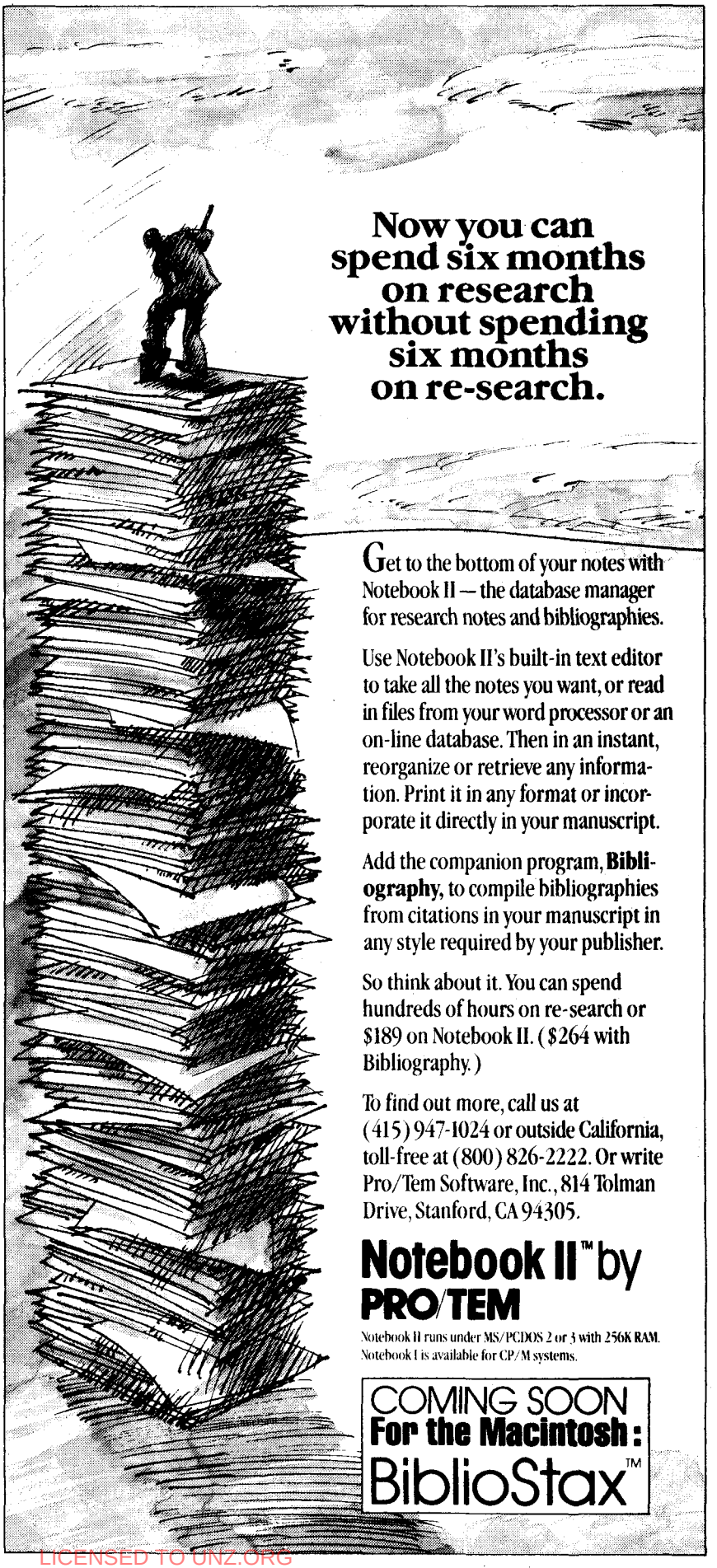
Can one see through this fog? It got thicker recently when *The Village Voice* went after Kazan not only with virulent language but with a cartoon of his face calculated to remind you of folks like Judas Iscariot. That may be how to sell papers but it is not the truth about Kazan. This is what actually happened. (In part, I depend here on his own account in the book. I do not think of him as a liar—more than you, reader, or myself.) Kazan went before HUAC in 1952 to refuse to name names, but, as Larry Parks had done in a famous or infamous proceeding in 1951, he changed his mind after his first meeting with the committee. There is a significant difference, however, between Kazan's case and Parks's. Parks submitted to committee blackmail—just caved in. Kazan was given a few weeks' grace. What did he do with those weeks? Consulted Molly, it would seem, and consulted her again. She knew about these things, and also (which maybe Kazan didn't) she knew where she stood, where all the right people stood. She after all was no Greek outsider. She was a real American. And if we are to believe *A Life*, which is, on most points, quite believable, she talked Kazan into changing his mind. He returned to Washington and named names.

He advances the best argument in favor of this: one is not betraying comrades if one is no longer a comrade but, on the contrary, is opposed to that comradeship and what it stands for, namely, Stalinism. But Molly went much further than this. Her argument, indeed, is in a different dimension. The Russians were coming! The White House badly needed to know if Morris Carnovsky was still in the C.P. and other such big stuff. The day after Kazan named names, a paid advertisement, signed by him, appeared in *The New York Times*. He reveals now that Molly wrote it. We should have guessed that earlier. As we should have guessed what he meant by her sainthood. She was a woman of principle whereas he felt, not without some justification, that he was a *man*, committed to the world, and lost in the world, a man, therefore, of no principle. She was an American, a term which meant not just not a Greek, not a Turk, but also not a Russian, not a Communist. Where this dovetailed with Kazan's *Life* was that, as an immigrant seeking assimilation, he wanted . . . he wanted . . . what did he want after all? Well, anything but to be a subversive. Subversion is an *un-American* activity. That would be like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being a Turkish Greek. Thus can an understandable, legitimate desire to be purely and 100 percent *American* lead, with Molly's help, to the wish to be an American approved of by J. Edgar Hoover. Thus did the "saint" become the evil genius. Poor Elia! The beating that might more properly have descended on Molly's back fell on his own. He was demonized by the left (readers of *The Nation*, *The Village Voice*) and the valid part of his argument was passed over. Passed over also was the fact that his accusers did not always have clean hands. Even after the death of Stalin in 1953, American communists and their sympathizers freely used silence, mendacity and defamation to bring down those who had not cooperated in their campaign against HUAC.

Had Molly given the opposite advice, we are asked to believe, Kazan would have taken it. I do believe this, since I believe his previous statement that he intended to refuse to name names and had actually refused on his first appearance before the committee. If, after these revelations, the diabolical Kazan evaporates completely, what takes his place is a person of very great weakness—a paradox, since he is obviously a person of very great power. And the woman who was named a saint because she was unworldly is, at a crucial point, the really difficult point, given the world to run. It is she who will stop the Russians from coming by the words she will put in the mouth of her messenger to the United States Congress. Behind every great man is the love of a good woman? Ah yes, but with what dire and bizarre consequences sometimes. At his moment of truth and untruth, his Mom no longer on hand, Elia Kazan had to turn to Saint Number Two.

Does the naming of names make the namer feel guilty? On this question, *A Life* contains nothing that Kazan did not say years ago, namely that while there is always an ugliness to "informing," he has put this incident behind him and feels anyway that there was a political case for doing what he did. Perhaps he has at last put the incident behind him—in the act of writing this book. He obviously did not put it behind him before that—as the book reveals. One of his bitterest moments had been when a colleague asked HUAC: "Is this the Kazan that signed the contract for $500,000 the day after he gave names to the Committee? Would you sell your brothers for $500,000?" The man was lying about this money, Kazan says. But he turns up in one of Kazan's dreams many years later. And Kazan's claim that he was not a "brother" seems belied by the fact that he wrote a sweet letter of sympathy at the time of Molly's death and that Kazan was touched.

When is a betrayal not a betrayal? When, Kazan argues, you no longer owe loyalty to the group concerned, when indeed you now regard them as the enemy. But the record is riddled with ambiguities. Kazan wants us to believe he originally intended *not* to name names. In which case he did not regard those people as enemies or their cause as a clear and present danger. Then again, one learns from Kazan's extensive reports on his love life that betrayal held a fatal fascination for him, for what he reports is not just womanizing, it is woman stealing. From her man, that is. Missing from the schema I set up above is an important category: other males. The book records a repeated temptation to betray friendship with them, a temptation that Kazan succumbed to (he doesn't say how often). The man is a good subject, not for a *Daily Worker* editorial, but for a Dostoevsky novel.

Kazan's account of Clifford Odets's naming of names is especially interesting. He thinks that, for Odets, it was a mistake, because he thereby lost something his ego absolutely required if he was to get on with his life and work—his position as a kind of culture hero to comrades and sympathizers. Use of this argument on behalf of his friend proves again that Kazan didn't really agree with Molly that naming names was necessary to national security. That he still feels good about doing so himself is attributed ultimately to the strength he was acquiring (and which he knew Odets could not acquire) to go it alone, the strength to do without comrades of any color. And thus the HUAC episode finds its place in the drama that is this book. For the reader, not a convincing place, I think, but certainly integral to the author's intent.

The other side of the plot has to do with show business. In the early 1940s, Kazan was the boy wonder of Broadway. In the late 1940s, he was the man who gave us the two leading playwrights of the new generation: Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams. In the early 1950s he was a leading director both in Hollywood and on Broadway, a unique

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achievement, I believe. Through all these years, he became more and more troubled by what he calls the Anatolian within him—the pliant, complaisant, ingratiating side. His nickname, now indignantly rejected, was Gadget. He could fix things. He could get along with the guys. He aimed to please, and he succeeded in pleasing others. Was he equally pleasing to himself? By no means. If there is some bragging in his book, there is more self-reproach. He isn't even sure he was ever a good director. He attributes the early successes of the boy wonder to anything except his own talent. All of which leads us to the real turning point in the story, which is the rejection of the Anatolian. At this point, Kazan drops regular show business, makes a highly personal kind of film (principally, *America, America*) and writes novels, the success of the whole process being reported and confirmed in the present book, whose happy ending announces a new wife—another saint, but one to whom he finds he can be faithful.

Scoundrel Time. For some, Kazan was *the* scoundrel of that time. Of course he wasn't. Not even *a* scoundrel. But having read his book we have to ask, as we ask after reading Hellman's several memoirs: Is it true? Large holes have been found in Hellman's stories: What she wanted us to take as literal fact has a great deal of fiction to it. And Kazan? I doubt if he is open to that kind of criticism. It's not the facts, it's the valuations that are questionable. For example, the drama as described here only comes off, at its climax, if you can accept his novel *The Arrangement* as a really good book. I for one cannot see his career as he does, because I do not enjoy *The Arrangement*, and I did enjoy his Broadway productions, even the early ones directed by the boy wonder. It's by a false modesty that he disowns these. Of course, the structure of his story demands it. There's the rub. What is success? Just a successful therapy? That the book certainly describes. Or self-transcendence resulting in finer self-realization in art? The author affirms this but the evidence he gives for it is *The Arrangement* and other such items. And what he writes most movingly about is death. That is the final paradox. He was at the hospital when his second wife, Barbara, and his mentor Harold Clurman lay dying there. Preoccupied through most of the book with success, he writes best


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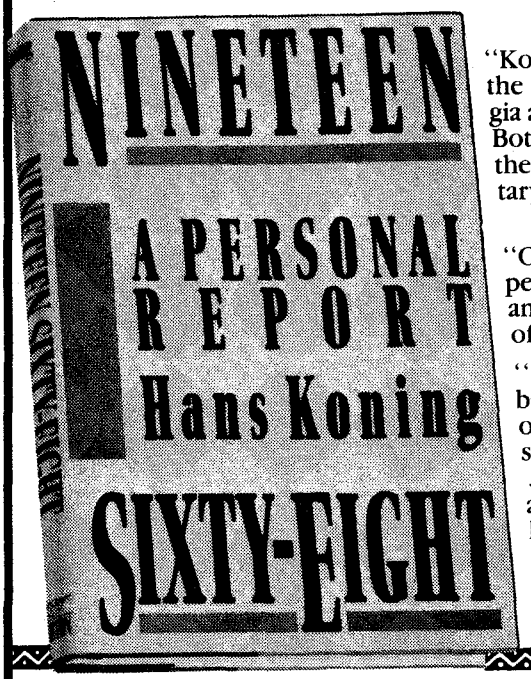


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when he contemplates the universal unhappy ending. His prose conveys authentic affection, even love, without sentimentality or "beautiful writing."

But if the reader senses a cultural gulf between Kazan and such as myself he is right. I feel much farther from him in this respect than in the matter of Communism and HUAC. Although he has fought many enemies and rebelled against many authority figures, he has never fought middle-class artistic values. It has even been important to him to embrace such values: This is what it meant to become assimilated. There are judgments in this book that reveal a lot, for instance his view that the two outstanding critics of the drama in our time were Harold Clurman and Molly Day Thacher. What does he have to say about the other critics who helped create a climate of opinion for a new and more enlightened American theater in such places as New Haven and Cambridge? Nothing. Or rather a bare mention of Richard Gilman and Robert Brustein, both characterized simply as kibitzers. (I myself am mentioned in a single false statement not relevant here. Mendacity is not in question, just forgetfulness and insensitivity.) I read with much interest that Kazan, as a student at Williams College, studied *The Waste Land*: I wonder what he thought about it. His literary orientation is strictly Book of the Month Club, and a slight touch of paranoia enters the discussion when he mentions that his novels are ignored by serious critics of fiction, whom he sees as conspiring against him. And while it is true that Kazan's explosive sexuality would at one time have represented a revolt against bourgeois values, today it is part and parcel of the swinging suburbs.

Finally, I am inclined to quarrel with the psychological theory behind *A Life*, and particularly with the notion of self-transcendence. I agree, rather, with what Oscar Wilde had in mind when he said, "Only the worthless can be reformed," and would add that, if there's an Anatolian in you at the beginning, there will be one in you at the end. In Kazan's case, there clearly is. And *this* Kazan, the one who aimed to please, succeeds in pleasing. In *A Life* Kazan quarrels with the Anatolian. But the reader doesn't. And its better pages were written *by* the Anatolian. Who else could induce us to like Elia Kazan, as we do, in spite of everything? □

# FILMS.

## JAMES LARDNER

**Commissar**
**Red Heat**

When Lena Horne gets to reminiscing about the Hollywood of the 1940s, she likes to tell how Ava Gardner and Jeanne Crain beat her out for the roles of light-skinned black women in *Showboat* and *Pinky*, two of the first American films (as ridiculous as it now sounds) to touch on the race problem. Perhaps there are Soviet Jewish actors with similar stories to tell about learning, in 1966, that a film was going to be made about Jewish life in the southern Ukraine during the civil war of the early 1920s, and that the main Jewish characters would be played by the gentile actors Rolan Bykov and Raissa Nedashkovskaya.

Based on a story by Vassily Grossman (and, like his novel *Life and Fate*, long-suppressed), *Commissar* is about an already overburdened Jewish couple, Yefim and Maria Magazanik, who are forced to billet a dedicated but inconveniently pregnant Bolshevik—a tough cookie who, at the beginning of the film, orders the execution of a soldier for going AWOL in order to visit his wife. An American seeing *Commissar* in 1988 must grapple with the fact that Bykov, like Ava Gardner in *Showboat*, has songs (and a few bits of spoken Yiddish) dubbed for him by someone else, while Nedashkovskaya, besides looking more Russian than Jewish, has managed to preserve a suspiciously good complexion and youthful figure for a poor woman who has been through half a dozen childbirths and no end of housework. The idealization is more than skin deep; after some initial grumbling on the husband's part, the Magazaniks flutter nervously over their unwanted guest like a nervous pair of Florence Nightingales.

It is tempting to think of the film that might have been made from this wonderful premise if the director, Alexander Askoldov, had not felt obliged to endow the Magazaniks with quite so much of the milk of human kindness and the folk wisdom of the ages—if he had been willing, in short, to depict them in an unsentimentalized light. But that was no more possible for a Soviet filmmaker in 1966, than it would have been possible for the Hollywood filmmakers of the 1940s to depict black characters that way. On forbidden ground, people can't help treading lightly. *Commissar* was Askoldov's response to the official pretense that anti-Semitism could not exist in a socialist society. He set out to tell a story—there is no escaping the crudity of the intent—that would present Jews as an admirable people who had been wronged by history. "I made this film for the Russian anti-Semite," he has said.

The remarkable thing is that despite its sentimentality and didactic purpose—and its wretchedly ill-synchronized soundtrack—*Commissar* is a lively piece of filmmaking that evokes the vigorous, formal epics of the golden age of Soviet cinema. Although the essence of the story is the encounter between the commissar and her hosts, the film (shot in black-and-white and in the Soviet equivalent of Cinemascope) contains a number of dazzling action scenes in which Askoldov's work, although not all of a piece aesthetically, seems far more assured than when he is trying to warm our hearts or bring tears to our eyes. When Klavdia, the commissar, goes into labor, her ordeal is intercut with a stunning flashback of a military campaign in the desert, in which the Reds struggle to push a gun over a sand dune. The ebb and flow of war is dramatized by richly stylized battle scenes and sequences in which the Red troops parade through the small Ukrainian city in which the story takes place. The Magazaniks' children play a variation of cowboys and Indians that might be called "Cossacks and Jews" and—such is the power of mass culture—they seem to identify with the Cossacks. In one early scene, they pull a doll out of a hole in the ground and hold a summary execution; later, the victim's role is assumed by one of the daughters, whose siblings scream "Jew bitch," "Dirty Yid!" as they rip her clothes and tie her to a swing—and the pendular motions of her hanging figure are prolonged in eerie slow-motion.

*Commissar* was Askoldov's first full-length work, and remains, to date, his last. While other directors of his generation managed to go on working after having a film or two shelved by the censors, Askoldov was declared "professionally incompetent" and hasn't directed again.

Partly, the explanation seems to lie in the intensity with which he protested the censors' decision. But it must also lie in

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the nature of the film itself. Even now, with the Soviet film industry largely under the control of those who considered themselves rebels five, ten and fifteen years ago, *Commissar* and Askoldov remain problem cases. The film has yet to be given a general release in the Soviet Union. (It was shown at the Moscow Film Festival last year only after Askoldov raised a stink about it at a gathering attended by foreign journalists.) And Askoldov remains, in effect, blacklisted—by inertia if not by decree.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the vigilance of Goskino, the state film ministry, extended to some extremely subtle offenses against official history. Andrei Konchalovsky's *Asya the Lame One*, for example, was suppressed for the crime of presenting a monotonous picture of rural life, and Alexei Gherman's *Trial on the Road* for suggesting that not every Russian taken prisoner by the Nazis was necessarily a traitor. *Commissar*'s sins, obviously, were more basic than that. Askoldov, who is not Jewish, had implied that the Russian Revolution was something other than a blessing to the Jews, rich or poor.

Although the Whites murdered Yefim Magazanik's brother, Yefim responds even-temperedly to the news that the Reds are leaving town. "This is the best time for people," he says. "One bunch of rulers gone—another not yet come. No tribute, no requisitions, no pogroms." New rulers, he observes, are always dangerous because they make promises they can't fulfill, and "then they have to find someone to blame, and who is to blame? Who is always to blame?" The film then flashes forward to an image of Ukrainian Jews being rounded up by the Nazis, leaving the strong implication that their coming, too, did not represent such a very profound change.

When a director goes awry, the bureaucrats of Goskino (unlike their kin at Universal and Warner Brothers) do not seize the power of "final cut." They may propose, but rarely order, changes. After taking a look at *Commissar* in 1967, the censors advised Askoldov to remove the flash-forward and to muddy the matter of the Magazaniks' ethnicity. Two minor alterations—a few hours' work in the editing room—and he could have had a career.

Walter Hill, the director of *Red Heat*, has had his run-ins with the censors, too. A few years ago he made a film about gang wars in Los Angeles, *The Warriors*, which a number of theater owners found unacceptably violent—not an easy thing for an American film to be in the 1980s. Hill, like Askoldov, sees himself as a man of conscience. "I make the kind of movies I liked best when I was a kid," he says. "They were about cops, crooks, cowboys, pretty girls, jokes, fast cars, gunfire and fistfights. And honor. And tradition. And style. I measure my work by that yardstick. And I don't give a damn about anybody else's yardstick."

Happily, Walter Hill was born in a country where his sort of fierce commitment to fast cars, gunfire and fistfights needn't stand in the way of a comfortable career in the movies.

Like *Commissar*, *Red Heat* had its origins in an idea that was bound to generate controversy: Arnold Schwarzenegger as a Moscow cop, who journeys to Chicago, hot on the trail of the villainous Viktor Rostavili, a Georgian drug kingpin. American moviegoers, it appears, are fated to get a stereoscopic glimpse of the not-so-evil Empire over the next few years, with one lens provided by the export of Soviet films and the other by Hollywood's own struggle to come to terms with Gorbachev and *glasnost*. If *Red Heat* is any guide, we will be seeing the Soviet Union portrayed as a place where, unlike our own smarmy society, a clear sense of right and wrong still prevails.

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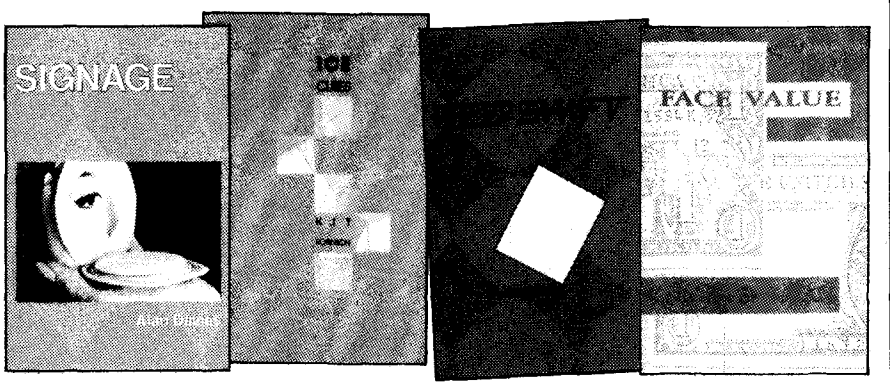


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cow's homicide division"—doesn't smoke, drink, curse, take bribes or engage in loose sex, and he is built like . . . well, you know who. In an early scene he strides alone into a rough-looking Moscow saloon—"I want Viktor! Viktor Rostavili!" he cries—and the patrons rise up in rebellion against his neo-Stalinist bluster. "Where's your evidence?" they demand, almost as one. Whereupon Ivan smashes his way through the crowd, plucks the suspect from his chair, and tears his leg off—an artificial leg, packed with cocaine. So much for evidence.

The villainous Viktor escapes, killing Ivan's partner, and Ivan, of course, follows him—to Chicago, where Ivan joins forces with Art Ridzik, a slovenly Chicago cop played by Jim Belushi. "This Viktor Rostavili, he must have pissed off quite a few commissars for them to send you here," says Art, who is quite a witty guy. "What did he do? Take a leak on the Kremlin wall?"

At first glance, Art does not seem to bring a lot to the partnership, brainwise or brawnwise. When they catch up with one of Viktor's accomplices, Art tries to acquaint Ivan with some of the niceties of the Chicago style of interrogation, such as the practice of threatening to plant contraband on someone unless he agrees to talk. But Ivan loses patience and breaks one of the suspect's fingers, explaining, "Soviet method more efficient." Consoling ourselves with the recollection of the first few, unfortunate rounds of Rocky Balboa's match against a Soviet boxer, we wait confidently for Art to show Ivan a thing or two—but we wait in vain. *Red Heat* is not only one of the first Soviet-American buddy films but one of the most one-sided buddy films in the history of buddy films.

I think it is safe to say that Hill and his collaborators did not allow themselves to get bogged down in the research phase of their undertaking. Nevertheless, they have come up with a few revelations about police practices, cocaine use and other aspects of modern Soviet life which, you might think, would be distasteful to the authorities in Moscow. The same could be said of a plot that hinges on an international cocaine network ruled by Georgian mobsters and a gang of black pseudo-Muslims called The Cleanheads, whose leftist rhetoric shrouds their secret plan "to sell drugs to every white man in the world—and his sister."

What are we to make, then, of the fact that Sovinfilm, the state agency that oversees foreign production deals, allowed the *Red Heat* team to film two brief sequences in Red Square, thus conferring on this unlikely project the honor of being the first Hollywood feature to be shot in the Evil Empire? It appears that Walter Hill, unlike Alexander Askoldov, is a director the Soviets can live with. □


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# THEATER.

## THOMAS M. DISCH

**Hamlet**
**I Shall Never Return**
**Stars in the Morning Sky**

To exist or not to exist? That is not exactly the question Hamlet asked, but it poses another: To what degree can the performance of a Shakespeare play in other languages than English be said to be Shakespearean? Only poetry-attuned polyglots can hazard a guess, but surely poetry is the crux of the matter. Take away that and the residue may be a saga staged by a mentally handicapped individual, full of tricky special effects but deficient in ultimate significance (to paraphrase one of the Bard's heroes).

This is not to suggest that Ingmar Bergman is an idiot, or that there is anything wrong with Britt G. Hallqvist's translation of *Hamlet*—only that I don't see how anyone without a grasp of Swedish could presume to judge the Royal Dramatic Theatre of Sweden's production, which recently played for eight performances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. One could, glimmeringly, enjoy this or that tableau, and certain of the director's basic suppositions did penetrate the language barrier; for example, that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are foppish homosexual clones of the sitting duck variety; that Hamlet is meant to be perceived, in his first scenes, as a surly know-it-all punk kid, his speech to the players rank with condescension. But at the molecular level, precision of delivery is the essence of Shakespearean performance, and when Hamlet speaks Swedish, heaven—and other Swedes—must be his judge.

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What the non-Swedish spectator is left with is an opportunity to reflect on how Shakespearean theater comes across for those with no command of English. For me Bergman's *Hamlet* was much like Kabuki, interesting in proportion to the amount of stage business. Hamlet gassing with Horatio is dull, but the ghost is fun. Bergman, showman that he is, seems to have anticipated our need for balletically big gestures and choreographs accordingly. He has Claudius and Gertrude enter copulating, as a chorus of robed and masked figures applauds politely. Hamlet emulates their candor in his dealings with Ophelia. Had the two of them been speaking Volapük instead of Swedish, we groundlings would have got the message, which was not unlike that of *The Virgin Spring*: men are beasts. However, even with the furthest license symbolism allows, the number of scenes that can be ornamented with physical abuse or sexual pantomime is limited, and the rest isn't silence, it's Swedish.

A much commoner recourse for a theater company that would like to show its stuff on the international circuit is represented by Poland's Cricot2 Theater's production of Tadeusz Kantor's *I Shall Never Return*, which appeared at La Mama e.t.c. as part of the First New York International Festival of the Arts. Indeed, Kantor's work may be said to be of international rather than specifically Polish origin, as the program declares this a co-production of institutions in Berlin, Milan, Paris and Kraków. Its style is traditional avant-garde, much like the work of Richard Foreman, the components of which, as prescribed by I.S.R.B., the International Surrealist Regulation Board, are: 1) ranting monologues delivered by the author/director or his proxy in a quotation-marked manner that permits deniability as to the content of any given statement; 2) "nightmare" images (torture, violence, rape) and glimpses of nudity; 3) a set and props constructed from junk and odd lots; and 4) a staunch commitment to the traditional surrealist view that Modern Life Eats Shit, with its corollaries that pop culture destroys the mind, all authority figures do the goose step and every artist is a sacred cow. If you would be funded by a government council or major foundation, that is the line to which you must cleave, nor should it be wondered at that the powers that fund should be advancing the careers of the very artists who denounce them, since performance pieces put together according to I.S.R.B. specifications function as effectively as aversion therapy in sending ordinary theatergoers elsewhere. Why hang those who, with just a pittance of rope, can be counted on to hang themselves? The only conceivable audience for such antiplays as Kantor's are those who aspire to be similarly funded.

Viewed in that light, the incoherencies of the "Monologue" printed in the program (and presumably delivered in Polish onstage) become almost lucid. (I quote Agnieszka Perlinska's translation without its line breaks, which splinter the text at poetic three- or four-word intervals.) "Dear actors. Colleagues. You must have strength and keep the hygiene of life in order to ascend sensibly and therapeutically to applause. . . . When one is very unhappy then suddenly some hellish power is born in this trash called man. One should nourish it. First unhappiness, then this power. . . . I have virtually nothing else to say."

Critics are wont to say, reviewing such events, that one really doesn't need to know the language in which they're cast in order to appreciate them. Indeed, to be innocent of Polish is probably an advantage in viewing Kantor's work, since the Polish we hear confirms the surrealist doctrine that all discourse is silly gibble-gabble. To quote


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Kantor, "Like all official speeches in the world it is deaf to the human fate."

And what are the tableaux that our linguistic innocence allows us to study free from discursive context? Lots of "little" people scurrying about in rags, emitting brief mouse-squeaks of futile protest: among them a pair of middle-aged identical twins dressed as Hassidim, a vamp confined in a mobile chicken coop, a comatose Adonis wheeled about on a torture rack, and "the Grand Gymnast," a man with a gigantic knapsack. Opposed to this potpourri of victims is a small army of jackbooted quasi-Nazis who goose-step in single file as they bow gray violins. These musicians/marchers are conducted by a rabbi, and though Kantor is much too decorously avant-garde to be accused of having a paraphrasable idea, his treatment of the imagery of Jewish (and other) victims seemingly in collusion with their oppressors would not be without offense to anyone who might think to "interpret" his *mise en scène*.

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What is most disheartening about the all-purpose angst and posturings of I.S.R.B. theater is that the machineries of cultural exchange have led us to regard these clichés as the house-style of Central Europe. There the avant-garde can legitimately claim to be a repressed minority, an unenviable status, surely, but not without its perks, among them the unquestioning respect of those who live at a safer distance from history's nightmare. But don't Western funders flatter themselves—and denigrate Poles—by encouraging Polish artists to adopt "We are the slaves, we are the victims" as the national anti-anthem? Cannot the realities of Central or even Eastern Europe be addressed more directly and with an art that is not obdurately obscurantist?

To that rhetorical question the Leningrad Maly Drama Theatre makes a fairly persuasive affirmative response in their festival offering, Alexander Galin's *Stars in the Morning Sky* at the American Place Theatre. The Maly had originally intended to present its two-evening seven-hour adaptation of Fyodor Abramov's novel *Brothers and Sisters*, but their producer's well ran dry before that play could open, and the more modestly scaled *Stars*, which had already been staged in Toronto, was put on in its place. After my earlier doses of drama in Swedish and Polish, I felt a bit of trepidation about *Stars in the Morning Sky*, though in the event the language barrier was surmounted by the simple expedient of headphones delivering a simultaneous translation. At the cost of only a little cognitive dissonance, the play becomes as comprehensible as a dubbed movie.

But following the story was only the first of my trepidations. What about that title, so redolent of the Soviet brand of Positive Thinking associated with Socialist Realism? And the subject of the play, prostitution, is one liable to call forth twaddle even from first-rate writers. I guess I doubted whether Russians have the necessary intellectual space to deal with subjects rated For Mature Audiences Only. As it turns out, my doubts were groundless. The play is not bromidic, and if it does somewhat mythologize its subject, so do equivalent classics by writers as diverse as Dumas, O'Neill and Fellini.

In brief: It is July of 1980 and by way of tidying up Moscow for the Olympics four prostitutes have been shipped out to a tumbledown barracks that once served as a mental hospital, where they are to be kept out of sight for the duration of the festivities. The prostitutes make do with the reduced opportunities of their new environment. The youngest and least jaded, Maria, has a brief romance with their landlady's son, while Lora, a hooker with a constant hunger to be reassured of her (professional) status as a sex object, seduces Alexander, an ingenuous escapee from the local asylum. (These and other matters are treated with all the candor one would expect from a contemporary American author. Nudity is used both lyrically and for shock value; the language is plausibly earthy.) But these two "romances" are all in a night's work for Maria and Lora and lead nowhere. Galin focuses his drama not on the possibilities of redemption by love, so often celebrated by other literally porno-graphic playwrights; rather, like Chekhov or Gorky, he is mapping a milieu—the drab realities of daily life in the gutter.

As the over-the-hill alcoholic Anna, Tatiana Shestakova (who is also credited as co-director), is the very queen of drabness and sets the tone of the play: humorous without milking the laughs, melancholy without becoming maudlin. Nothing happens to Anna. Her one offer to turn a trick is rejected. But the defining moment of the drama is hers: she eats a piece of cake, an action, as Tatiana Shestakova performs it, as fraught with tragedy as any self-immolation by hara-kiri. Irina Seleznyova, as the self-deluding Blanche DuBois–like Lora, and Natalya Akimova, as Maria, deliver performances nearly as memorable. The play's director (and artistic director of the Maly company as well), Lev Dodin, wielded his baton with a Russian readiness to let the big moments boom, but his pianissimos were no less vivid.

If *Stars in the Morning Sky*, which was written in 1984 and first performed in 1987, is to be considered one of the first fruits of *glasnost*, then the process is working as one might hope. After the long Siberian night of Socialist Realism, *Stars in the Morning Sky* seems no misnomer for a play that represents the new moment in history—both in its ostensible subject matter, the Olympics, and self-reflectively *an sich*—when Russia and Russianness are once again part of the larger world culture. Again and again in the course of the play I was put in mind of characters and moments I'd experienced in the Russia of my imagination. There was an echo of Mishkin

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in the holy lunatic Alexander, a whiff of Marmeladov in Anna's peculiarly Russian way of getting drunk. How nice to be part of the same world with Russia. So, here's a bouquet for all concerned and a welcoming chorus of "Hello, Maly!" □

# DANCE.

## MINDY ALOFF

### Ice Theatre of New York

John Curry, the British-born figure skater, made a rare Manhattan appearance this May, performing at Sky Rink as one of the guest stars on a one-time-only program hosted by the Ice Theatre of New York. (According to *The New York Times*, Ice Theatre is a nonprofit skating company founded in 1984 with the aim of establishing "a new repertory on ice.") Curry presented two solos, which together occupied less than ten minutes of the two hours. They swept by like ten seconds. Although he served up leaps and spins, he never offered them seriatim: Neither solo was an exercise in bravura. Instead, we tracked his austerely dressed, finely proportioned figure, so lean that his profile seemed a blade, variously speeding up or slowing down while a singer on tape scaled or descended a voluptuous operatic melody. Cleverness, competition, dazzle seemed irrelevant. The focus was sure, the style sustained, the tone steady and true, with the ghost of melancholy in it. Watching him, one marveled again at how intimate and immediate, how much of an art, ice skating can be.

"I always knew that I had one thing to say in life, and one thing only," Curry has written. "I believe that skating can be expressive." He's hardly unique in professing the principle, or achieving it—in this country, one thinks of Peggy Fleming, Janet Lynn—but he may be exceptional in his methods. Curry's recipe for expressiveness is almost a formula: choreography based on the nuances of traditional skating technique, especially the legato precision needed for the tracing of school figures; first-rate music from the concert hall, usually from before World War I; and the turnout and carriage of classic ballet. Other skaters freely use these elements: the Ice Theatre program was built around the relationship between skating and dancing. But Curry seems to believe in the power of music, technique and tradition to illuminate as well as charm, and to charm for their own sakes, without any sort of "dumbing down." His style can skirt a narrow refinement, like the highbrow concert tap of Paul Draper. Curry's own public persona, so understated, borders on the recessive. Yet his effect in performance is direct, clarifying, fundamental, profound. He doesn't skate big or flashy—his range has always been angled to focus on this or that formal aspect. But he presents skating so that we perceive it in an enlarged context, in life and death terms. He presents it as an expression of faith.

Curry's choreography takes off from the question of how long the skater's blade can remain in contact with the ice, rather than how soon it can leave. (A statement in the printed program by Ice Theatre artistic director Rob McBrien about the skater's "edge" and the importance of centrifugal force seems closely allied to Curry's approach.) One of the most elegant ways he dramatizes this continuity is by threatening to interrupt it. In *Attila*, his first and more magnetic solo with Ice Theatre, the large image was lyrical and uncomplicated, a message of Olympian calm etched in a cursive journey around and across the rink. Within that, however, he distinctly adjusted his speed often, now accelerating effortlessly, now whittling down his attack to the point of stillness, then, just as one expected him to stop cold, catching a new inside edge and sailing off once more. All of this was matched to the movement of a singer's voice (in an excerpt from Verdi's *Attila*); and the unsettling possibility that the performer might stop, conjoined with his beautiful, cutting line and seamless fidelity to the dynamic of the aria, encouraged an impression of urgency as well as grandeur.

*Attila*'s vocabulary was very spare: a double air turn, spins in sitting and standing positions, an arabesque (a "spiral" in skating), an attitude, a gliding stance on turned-out legs (a "spread-eagle"), heels apart and arms flying wide, like Leonardo's drawing of man. In the second solo, set to an excerpt from Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, we saw a magnificent gliding lunge position with a changing port de bras suddenly converted to a taffy-smooth spin; a split jump where the legs parted on one dry accent, like a camera shutter; and a strange, long, dreamlike glide for the entire figure, stretched out face down over the ice. In this solo, as expressionist


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as Curry's sensibility gets, there were also several decisive full stops followed by a poignant gesture or two in place. *Der Rosenkavalier* had a dark, mimed quality even in the pure skating passages, and those moments when the skater was stilled so the mime might speak seemed particularly chilling.

A few years ago, it looked as if Curry's vision of a classic skating style would be transferred to a whole company of performers. (Rob McBrien served as ensemble director with the John Curry Skaters throughout its world tour.) Then, without warning, the company fell apart and Curry reportedly abandoned skating for an acting career. The world that had taken pleasure in Curry's enlightened prospects fell back to its old ways, applauding competition and high concept over expressiveness as it had always done. New skaters floated into the public arena; women began to perform triple air turns routinely, and men to practice quads. There has been no general advance in the way most skaters relate to their music (i.e., as purely a generator of tempo). Indeed, one of the reasons that Brian Boitano's short program in the 1988 Winter Olympics was so effective was that it actually referred to the Meyerbeer waltz it used, seating his jumps just off the climax of the oompah phrases so as to build up to the idea of a peak in tension, when the last jump corresponded exactly with a climax of melody—a drama of delayed gratification that happened to read as an allegory of Boitano's own march toward mastery. (The use of this waltz was a dance in-joke, too, since it's one of the numbers that Fredrick Ashton used in his ballet about skaters, *Les Patineurs*.) Compared with Curry's musicality, this is elementary stuff, but it was a marked improvement compared with the current field.

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The future of partnering in skating as an expressive resource is unclear. International amateur competition, which conditions both technique and audiences, has decreed two sorts of styles since the early 1950s. There is "pairs skating," where one finds the lifts and thrown jumps and death spirals—that is, where the athletic dimension of partnering is exploited—and there is "ice dancing," a style based on competition forms of ballroom dance; this tends to be artful (Torvill and Dean) but, in terms of skating vocabulary, also sedate. In balletic terms, this would be like cutting up a grand pas de deux into partnered adagios and solos/coda: the division highlights stylistic elements but reduces expressive possibilities. Recently, it has seemed that the growing popularity of ice dancing has put pressure on pairs to distinguish themselves through a stepped-up athleticism that has led to some unfortunate practices. The Soviet pairs, especially, have noticed that it's possible to make the woman fly higher and turn more times if there is an exaggerated discrepancy between the heights and builds of the individuals in the couple. And so we're seeing match-ups whose only justification is leverage: men the size of basketball players and women tiny enough to stuff through hoops. (At least one Canadian pair of this sort competed internationally last year.)

The Ice Theatre program steered clear of this kind of exaggeration, suggesting different possibilities for pair skating. Its most provocative piece was *Dusk*, by stage choreographer Matthew Nash (translated to ice by McBrien), in which two women (Nina Newby and Moira North) skated several partnered duets together to songs by tango master Astor Piazzola; at the end, McBrien joined them but didn't participate in the partnering, underscoring their self-sufficiency as a couple. *Dusk* had none of the awkwardness that accompanies this sort of duet on the dance stage because in skating there is no important difference between men's and women's technique, apart from the extra turning jumps men can achieve owing to their build. If shows of muscle—lifts and throws—aren't involved, why not have ice dancing performed by two women? And why not pairs by two men? The smaller, thrown male partner could achieve even more sizzle than a woman of equivalent size. The possibilities of drama in such a match-up have already been plumbed on the dance stage by Remy Charlip in his male duets.

Among the more traditional pairs numbers, the most enthusiastic audience reception went to Gary Beacom and Gia Guddat, a partnership who once worked with Torvill and Dean. Beacom and Guddat are a handsome, physically complementary couple who share a blowsy and gregarious sense of fun. But they're indifferent to many stylistic matters and Guddat's basic skating ability is so far inferior to Beacom's that a fireworks vehicle like their *Don Quixote* pas de deux (choreographed to Minkus by the skaters and Canadian coach Frank Nowosad) seems more grossly mismatched than anything we saw in the Olympics from the flagpole Sergei Grinkov and Ekaterina Gordeyeva, his radiant flag.

Beacom is a talented soloist on his own, his strong point being a love for invention of new skating vocabulary, and his weakness an insensitivity to music so far-reaching that he choreographs entirely in additive series of unusual moves, four this and four that. He can oscillate his legs like the working end of a Roto-Rooter, he can crouch while gliding until his hair drags on ice between his thighs, he can pretzel his ankles and undo himself with a full twist on one count. In *Between Steel and Ice*, he performed this way to an electronic swatch of Gebrauchsmusik (by Darcy Guddat), written to support the already completed choreography. In *Alberta Biography*, a solo set to wild bird songs (arranged by ornithologist Roger Tory Peterson), the effect seems less laborious because the sound of the birds is already so arbitrary that anything visual promises to make sense of it. In both cases, the result is like reading a dictionary when you wanted a story. I wish Beacom had a musical adviser. He ought to be skating to Olivier Messiaen's *Catalogue des Oiseaux*, the same birdsongs but in composed time. His gifts are really those of a virtuoso skating clown, and he needs the discipline of more precise timing. "For it is the comics who use most inventively and most dramatically the peculiar resources of motion on the ice," Edwin Denby wrote in 1944. "It is out of the extremes of rhythm that skating alone can have that they build their dramatic effects."

At the moment, our greatest clown, in this sense, is John Curry. I take down my Watteau catalogue and there he is: the frank brows, the full mouth, the oblique gaze, staring out from the painting known as *Pierrot* or *Gilles*. Dramatic, infinitely expressive, and quite alone. □

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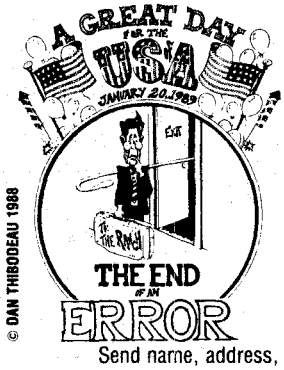


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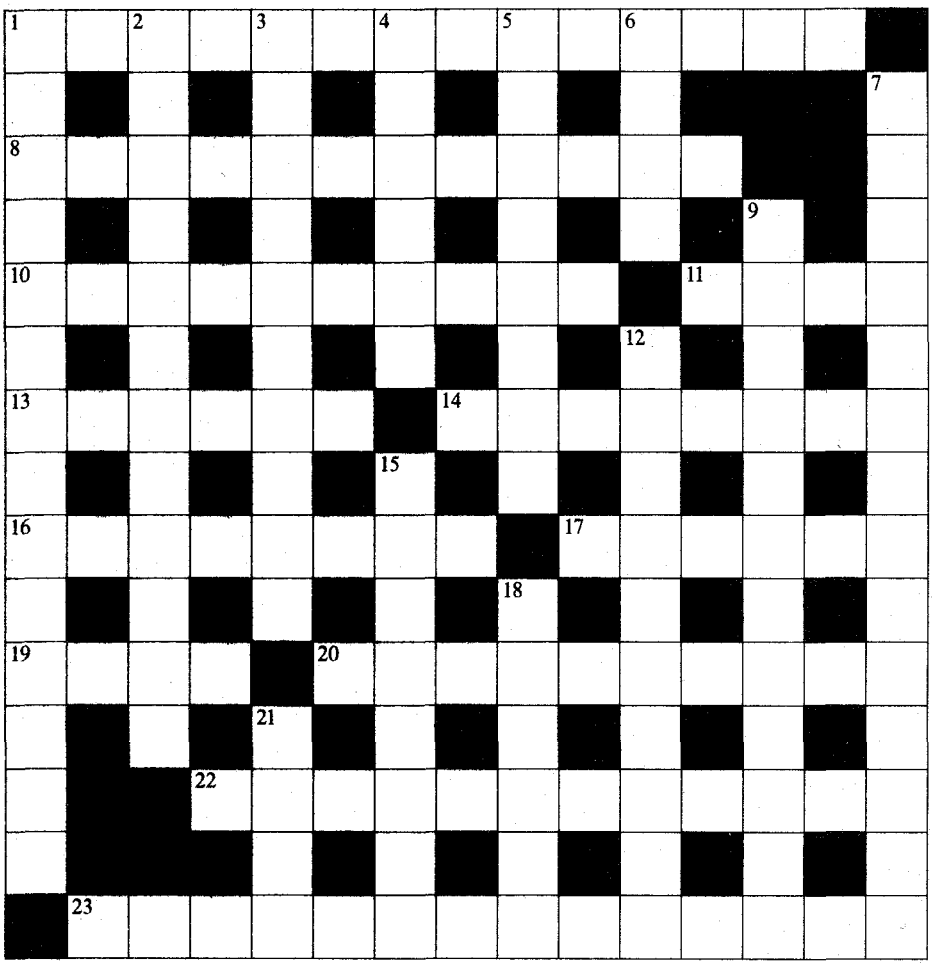
# Crossword Puzzle No. 2205

FRANK W. LEWIS



### ACROSS

1 Unfortunately, what some say we considered a country literally "beneath us" according to most charts. (6,8)
8 Basic ingredients for what might be shells, if the first word was wrong. (3,9)
10 Bad typists, man! They bang away, however! (10)
11 and 19 What Whittington did back in England with nothing in the kitty? (One doesn't stay on the same side.) (8)
13 It's illegal to do so, being a bad parent . . . (6)
14 . . . and such things wouldn't constitute a legal ruling, beginning an architectural survey. (8)
16 What Cockneys may not like to see recede, being taken on trips, possibly. (8)
17 Not a fair fight if it is, though the ball can be. (6)
19 See 11
20 A whale lets on to be different, obviously. (10)
22 Not necessarily descriptive of those who hate to fly—just the type that give you a lot of flak. (12)
23 Encouragement to the commanding officer to press forward? (He has a warning for the pack, however.) (7,7)

### DOWN

1 It's a peaceable thing to do, unless it's followed in someone's skull. (4,3,7)
2 Not the locale of "In Old New York"—more logically, "September Song." (3,9)
3 Comparatively tidy version of old cattle, taking a spin around the capital of Australia. (4,2,1,3)
4 There may be a catch if one does it correctly, though one might with a plastered entrance. (4,2)
5 You might be doing it with your finger, though such is supposedly not good manners. (8)
6 It might have to be paid by Cody, typically. (4)
7 Emerson's philosophy might be so considered central, and sent out this way. (14)
9 Futuristic trains might ride on one, implying "Ouch!" is wrong, and ultimately not cricket, as they say. (7,2,3)
12 Shuffle each card on getting to the office, religiously! (10)
15 Romeo-ing, as one might say, or cry, just before jumping? (8)
18 The second one might be D on the violin, otherwise on the bench. (6)
21 Sang badly, proving some small obstacle to performance. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT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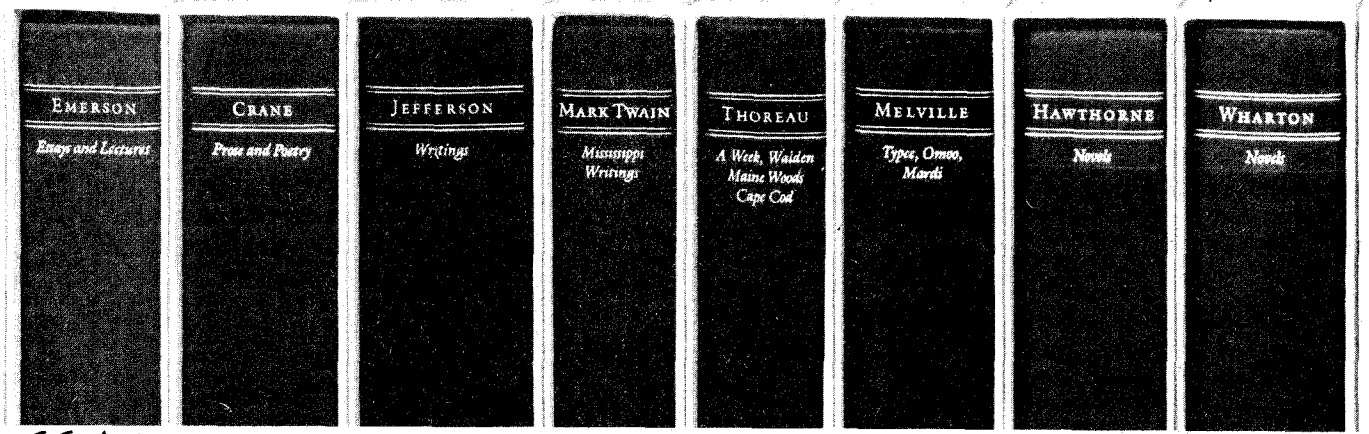


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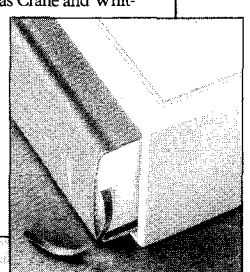

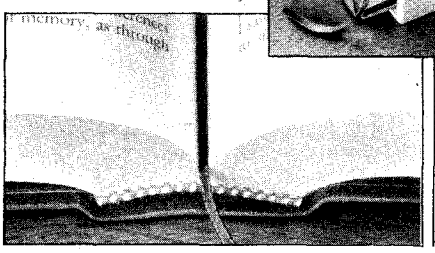

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